ATTITUDES TOWARD OTHER FAITHS

by
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Attitudes Toward Other Faiths

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"Treat one another with the same spirit as you experience in Christ Jesus."
Phil. 2:5 (Moffatt's translation).

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BY THE SAME AUTHOR

MARKS OF A WORLD CHRISTIAN
BUILDING WITH INDIA
WHITHER BOUND IN MISSIONS
SCHOOLS WITH A MESSAGE IN INDIA
CONTACTS WITH NON-CHRISTIAN CULTURES
DEVOLUTION IN MISSION ADMINISTRATION

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PREFACE

The world is rapidly becoming one great cooperating whole. We can see before us a world society in the process of coming into being. In this great society awareness of the judgments and actions of other peoples becomes inescapable, and these judgments from the other groups inevitably modify our own positions. It is just this passing of human isolation that makes a consideration of attitudes to other faiths increasingly necessary in our time. Such discussion is a transitional discipline to emancipate us from provincialisms and localisms. Since religion has been a great, if not the supreme, interest of human progress our welfare in a shrinking world demands that we rethink our attitudes in this important realm.

The new conditions under which this interplay of cultures is taking place challenge us to fresh applications of the old principle of reverence due to personality. Old ways which might now hurt the self-respect of other peoples must be laid aside, and ways suited to this generation found for showing respect to their convictions. We believe this to be a truly Christian tendency. And surely it should encourage us to make any necessary readjustments in thought or action when we remember that one sign of a living faith is found in an equilibrium that is not static, but dynamic.

In the long past many a religion has been found wanting and has ceased to be. In the present time of search-

ing test some of the world's religions will be laid aside as unequal to the needs of the modern day. There is danger lest some, losing confidence in their accustomed faith, will repudiate the good with the bad, lest real values be lost, and lest the cause of irreligion be furthered. In such a time of testing the interests of religion as against secularism demand that interreligious attitudes should be just and sympathetic as well as discriminating. This volume is an effort to face the increasing religious contacts which lie ahead with attitudes refined by the spirit of our Master and chastened by a consideration of how we would have others act toward us.

The issues treated have an obvious interest for Western Christians set down in the midst of large non-Christian majorities. But this book is not intended merely for those who are going abroad in Christian work; for the increasing interpenetration of the various faiths is found not alone in distant lands. The frontiers of effective contact may today be found in almost any country. One[1] who has been making an extended inquiry into the status of non-Christian religious organizations in one or more cities of twenty-five states has received reports stating that there are in California fourteen Buddhist temples, two Shinto shrines, and a few Hindu temples; in Denver, a Buddhist temple used by the Japanese; in Nebraska, several thousand Moslems. In Detroit, Mich., a $55,000 mosque was dedicated in 1921 which has since ceased to function although there are 2,000 Moslems in the city. The Buddhists in Seattle have a two-story building, a priest and fifteen teachers

[1] J. Jarden Guenther, Associate Rector of Memorial Church of St. Paul, Overbrook, Philadelphia, Pa.

(some paid), and five hundred adherents who carry on Sunday schools, Young Men's and Young Women's Associations, run a night school and publish a church paper. Chicago has a dwelling used as a mosque in which the muezzin's call sounds regularly. It is estimated that several hundred Moslems live in or about both Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. Several thousand Moslems are reported in Buffalo, nine hundred in Yonkers and plans are said to be under way for a mosque and Buddhist shrine in New York City. On many a campus right across the American continent the distinctively Protestant religious association has given way to a more inclusive organization—a University Religious Council—in order that Jews, Christian Scientists, Roman Catholics, and Protestants may work and grow together. Hence problems of cooperation with adherents of other faiths may come to people in America as well as to Christians in the Orient. Issues are sure to become more pressing in the future with increasing contact.

Furthermore, it is out from this complex of life here at home that travelers, merchants and missionaries go forth. Their attitudes to other faiths will very largely be caught from the temper and spirit of the communities from which they come. It is important, therefore, that wise and proper attitudes should become the common possession of all people.

It doubtless would be absurd to expect a person who is not brought into direct touch with other faiths to develop confidence and skill in dealing with specific issues such as face those who are right in the midst of religious contacts. Yet there is a spirit and working approach that all people should have. All should have a general knowledge, at least, of the kinds of problems that are raised by the clash of cultures. Often in these

chapters illustrations have been multiplied beyond what the bare point in question necessitated in order to show how the same issue recurs in different world areas.

After all, the problems abroad are not so different in principle from those which face us just around the corner here at home. Just because so much emotion and prejudice is stirred by the discussion of attitudes concerning nearby religious minorities, it may be easier to discuss similar issues about situations ten thousand miles away. We may thus bring back a steadying perspective to our local problem of adjustment between religions.

While for the purposes of this book it has seemed proper to bring a succession of what doubtless are unfamiliar situations before the reader, it should be understood that no one would be expected to give a final judgment on many of them without a greater warmth of local color. Each life situation has its own unique character, and we are teaching even our children that the same type of behavior which is fitting in one situation may not be fitting in another. The absence of those final shades of difference which make an action "all right" in one place and "all wrong" in another would invalidate this method of facing a succession of concrete situations if one's object were to set up inflexible rules of conduct. But when these situations are given as material upon which attitudes may be shaped and generalized, rather than as exercises for standardizing responses, there is not that same need for the last item in the way of data.

A serious judgment on the issues raised in these pages cannot be made without an intelligent grasp of other faiths. In fact, it is hoped that the insights here given

into the possible kinds of practical issues may stimulate many to go further in their study of religions.

With but one exception the incidents given come from real life. Some of them come from my own experience of twelve years in India or from later travels. Many more are the shared experiences of my friends. It should be said at once, however, that no one person would have to face anything like the variety of interreligious situations presented here. But as will be more fully shown in the Introduction my understanding of the way ideals and attitudes grow and become effective demands that these ideals and attitudes should be applied to an ever growing range of situation. Even though some of the situations may be exceptional, these bits from human experience can have a very real part in enriching or testing the significance of the ideal. They enable us to relive in a brief time the distilled experience of many others for the sake of the values for learning involved in this process. The distinctive contribution of these pages lies in this portrayal of definite, concrete situations necessitating interreligious relations.

This book has a positive constructive purpose. It does not touch some of the major themes in the usual consideration of Christianity's world program, such as message, motive, or promotional inspiration. Nor does it deal at any length with that most urgent task which faces professing Christians of the West, viz., intelligently to grasp, vitally to experience, and clearly to demonstrate the heart of Christianity. But it does recognize that one of the most serious questions confronting the missionary movement today is the relationship between Christianity and the non-Christian faiths. Believing that the essential nature of the Christian God leads his children to lives of positive love and sharing, this book

attempts to deal with certain attitudes which may do much to make or mar the results of this great outreach of Christianity. For we are learning that the main motive and the central message are not the only things that must be considered in Christianity's approach to other faiths. The undesigned results of our efforts sometimes have more far-reaching influence than that of the central aim. Modern education is revealing the importance of the incidental and associated effects which accompany the main effort. It is not enough for a teacher to pay attention merely to the lesson in the book. In every classroom many learnings are taking place simultaneously, often unconsciously, and many of them are marginal to the main concern of the hour. These "concomitant" learnings may be most significant. If this effort can in any way help in getting us on to a place where intelligent attitudes may be more taken for granted, then we can more effectively proceed with the main impulse toward that sharing of values in which every Christian instinctively believes.

In short, the object has been to consider actual situations which face those who stand at the crossroads of religions. It is hoped that this will help to develop attitudes which are marked by a love capable of being both discriminating and unconventionally creative. It has been an effort to find what the spirit of Jesus would lead us to do in the complex religious situations of today.

I am deeply indebted to friends among furloughed missionaries for material, and to others, especially to my wife, for looking over the manuscript and for generously giving of their time and constructive thought to this venture.

D. J. F.

INTRODUCTION

I

It is said that Cardinal Lavigerie, the zealous and devoted Archbishop of Algeria, made it his practice to alight from his carriage and to go forward on foot before such mosques as he happened to pass in his diocese.

Something of this same attitude must have possessed a veteran witness of Christ in China. With two younger friends in Christian work he was walking down Kuling Mountain. Far in the distance the older man pointed out the beautiful pagoda which towers above the city of Kiukiang twelve miles away. Then he asked his younger companions, "Gentlemen, how do you feel when you look at a beautiful pagoda like that?" After a little pause one said, "Well, it makes me feel sad." "It makes you feel sad?" asked the older man. "Why, it makes me rejoice. If the Chinese had no pagodas or other beautiful structures attesting to their deep religious instincts, it would be of very little use for others to try to put it into their hearts. It is because the Great Husbandman long ago sowed into their hearts the seeds of vital religion that there is hope for fruitage from our work."

A more marked difference in attitude was manifested in Nikko, one of the chief religious centers of Japan. Two missionaries stood under the great cryptomerias near one of the many temples which still astonish and

bewilder by their excellence and variety of decorative detail. "I hope the Japanese will never let this temple fall into ruin," said one. The other confessed that from his standpoint the temple could not rot away and be abandoned too soon.

After the establishment of the Republic in China in 1912, temples were being turned over for business and school purposes all through the country. The idols were being torn down and thrown out. Some Christians were grieved to see this because they thought that even the superstitious beliefs of the people were at least better than materialism and irreligion. Almost the same demand for definite attitude comes to one who reads a great and scholarly Buddhist's summary of religious conditions in the Orient, as this is affected by contact with the ideas, industry, science and politics of the West.

"The old religions have lost their positions of dominance and are being controlled or disturbed by the social changes that are taking place. Hinduism, hopelessly interwoven with the caste system, is pre-eminently a conservative, institutional force, and not an inspiring or regenerative power. Confucianism is an humanitarian ethic, but being an elaboration of a patriarchal system of politics and morals, its teachings are peculiarly static and formal. Shinto being a remnant of ancient nature worship and of the cult of the spirits, cannot hope to withstand the pressure of science, while its communal ethics is struggling for life in the face of the industrial régime. One religion that remains in the field with some hope is Buddhism. But it is hopelessly divided, its organizations are parochial, and its tenets often too metaphysical."[1]

[1] M. Anesaki, "The Religious and Social Problems of the Orient," p. 54.

You are doubtless glad that a Buddhist sees so clearly religious conditions in our modern world, and that he is frank enough to acknowledge them. But in the absence of any evidence that a religion of greater truth and progress is replacing the framework of systems well-nigh broken down, would his statement, in itself, give you concern, or cause you to rejoice? If you were reporting his statement to a group of Christian friends would you feel like adding an "Alas!" or a "Hallelujah!"? Still more important than the word is the philosophy which lies back of the choice.

II

It is the author's belief that the facing of concrete issues such as those given in the previous section has real value in working out one's philosophy of religion. If one hears that a Christian minister refused to speak or even to go on the platform at the prize-giving of a Hindu college because this would compromise Christianity, one at once wishes to clarify the implications back of such a decision.

Concrete situations also give meaning and body to abstract statements. It is easy to assent to the general ideal that one should seek to know other religions at first hand. But what about a certain Young Women's Christian Association in Ceylon which invited an outstanding Hindu to give them a series of talks on Hinduism on Sunday afternoons? Or suppose you have a Christian college which is attended by Hindus, Moslems, Sikhs, as well as Christians. A half hour each day is devoted to religious instruction. Does the general ideal as just stated involve the approval of the plan of this college by which acknowledged experts of the faiths concerned are given a place for lectures? The abstract

position is bound to take on form as one puts it to work.

Situations which present a conflict in ideals can be especially helpful in the development of attitudes. A Christian supervisor visited a certain district in China and happened to notice the name of the city evangelist in the list of donors to the newly repaired local Buddhist temple, as posted according to custom. This evangelist's particularly strong point was that all classes in this village considered him their friend. But in the supervisor's mind there was a conflict between friendliness and a Christian use of money. As one works out the reasons for the supervisor's censure on the one hand, or, on the other, the justification of the evangelist's gesture of friendship, attitudes to religions and religionists are being formed.

There are other gains from facing concrete situations. Knowledge of other religions as well as attitudes toward them find their test in living problems of relationship. The discussion of the concrete makes it easier to avoid overfacile generalizations. As we face a growing range of new situations, attitudes and ideals grow in richness and meaning. Moreover, living ideals are growing things, and it behooves us to get used to a process by which they are made over in order to meet new conditions. Only thus can we prepare ourselves for creative ethical living. For all these reasons, therefore, an effort has been made throughout this volume to present objective situations calling for some definite reaction to other faiths.

III

When such issues are raised it seems that the reader has a right to know what may be the considered judg-

ment on the part of some who have given thought to these questions. While, therefore, I have not hesitated to state my own or another's conviction or sense of right with respect to any issue, such judgments are given simply as additional data-material. It is entirely possible that not all these judgments may be wise. That is the more reason for the reader to use his own mind.

In spirit, therefore, this book is not propagandist—it does not aim to determine where the reader shall come out. It does attempt to marshal situations which involve problems for thought, and aims to help the reader form a judgment of his own.

There is great danger of superficiality in the actual practice of interconfessionalism. It is generally easy enough to enter into some form of affiliation with the adherents of another faith. But it is also easy to establish this relation on a basis that would be untrue to the highest in each faith. There is little real gain when the relationship is negotiated by those whose interest is romantic and dilettante and who have no real appreciation of the problems and values involved. And few there are who have set themselves to the laborious study of the world's religions.

There is a further danger of indifferentism as a result of interreligious association. When a group becomes more inclusive, it may become more innocuous and less vital. If fraternization means watering down to a least common denominator, the process is fraught with loss. If, however, each is alert to share his best, interconfessionalism can work out for good. In fact each party should be expected to witness with conviction. Whatever the majority group may be, it should expect the minority groups to give their contribution not merely as a right, but as a duty toward all concerned.

The author manifestly has convictions in this field. He does not believe that all religions equally satisfy the vital needs out of which religions take their rise. Hence he cannot be neutral in the sense of standing passively outside and away from the very unequal religions of the world. Not to be neutral, but to be impartial, is the ideal. For believing that the needs of mankind can best be met in the thought and faith that center in Jesus Christ the author makes no more apology than does a chemist when he is convinced on evidence that oxygen is a more active agent than nitrogen gas; or than a physicist who concludes that rock crystal transmits more of the sun's heat rays than does ordinary glass. Both men and societies need to know the highest source for motive powers; both need to know the medium between them and God which is most transparent. Value judgments on these points are not unduly obtruded in this volume.

In the following pages seven realms of contact are discussed, in each of which thought must be adjusted to the presence of other faiths.[1] Some of the concrete situations may seem trivial; but the attitudes which are tested or still further formed by the consideration of these situations are not trivial. An attitude is usually not a reasoned product, but the distillation of varied experiences—sometimes, as here, the shared experiences of those who live where religions touch. Let it be clearly understood that *it is the creation of attitudes rather than the adoption of specific solutions or particular courses of action that is the object of the study.*

[1] An eighth most important realm—the degree of aggressiveness which should be manifested by adherents of one faith toward the followers of another—is left for a separate volume.

ATTITUDES TOWARD OTHER FAITHS

SEVEN REALMS OF CONTACT

CHAPTER I

THE POSSIBILITY AND LIMITS OF COMMON WORSHIP

I

A British Christian in India was sitting on the floor one day with his Hindu friend. They were about to read the Bhagavad Gita. "Let us pray first," the Hindu said, and recited the formula which is regularly used before reading the Gita.

Him whose compassion makes the dumb man to speak
And the cripple to cross mountains
Him the All-Blissful, the Honey Sweet I salute!
I salute that God who is praised with divine hymns
By Brahma, Varuna, Indra, Rudra and Maruta.

The Christian expressed appreciation, but confessed that he could not easily hear salutations to Brahma, Varuna, and the rest. He did not really believe in them. The Hindu said that this did not matter, that they were only names and that the missionary could put his own meaning into them. Then the Hindu asked for a Chris-

tian invocation. The missionary recited the opening of the Te Deum.

> We praise Thee, O God,
> We acknowledge Thee to be the Lord.
> All the earth doth worship Thee
> The Father everlasting.
> To Thee all angels cry aloud,
> The heavens, and all the powers therein.
> To Thee cherubim and seraphim continually do cry.

The Hindu did not object to this prayer. But as the Christian came away a question forced itself upon him. He had refused to use the Hindu's formula because it contained words into which he would have to read a totally new meaning; was he really any better in expecting the Hindu to join him in worshiping God as adored by cherubim and seraphim? [1]

Again, in India, a Christian and a Hindu had become friends. The Hindu was a man of true devotion and sincerity, a mystic to whom the presence and love of God were very real. One evening they were seated in the Hindu's room about a table on which lay their open Bibles. The Hindu had been expounding with great enthusiasm the second and third chapters of the Epistle of St. John, often with an interpretation seriously differing from the Christian's. That night as they read together, Christ was the dominant thought in both their minds. The Christian was about to suggest that they pray together, when he recalled that his friend usually thought of God in terms of Kali and that to his friend Kali is as fully and truly a manifestation of God as is

[1] Cf. A paper read before the Calcutta Missionary Conference by Rev. R. L. Pelly. "The National Christian Council Review," Vol. 2, p. 131.

Jesus Christ. Only slowly was this friend learning to think of God in terms of Christ. In view of these differences he let the opportunity pass.[1]

These illustrations show how difficult spiritual fellowship is when conceptions of God are widely divergent. Very great differences exist between religions and nothing will be gained by obscuring such differences. Everyone with a delicate conscience shrinks from using conceptions in worship which he thinks do not correspond with truth, or which he is not able to make real to himself. Any note of dishonesty or of insincerity would mar the worship.

But is *no* fellowship in spiritual things possible or permissible by Christians with those who do not give Christ the same position as we do? At what point does difference become so acute as to destroy all possibility of fellowship in worship? Must the line be drawn so as always to exclude non-Christians; or are there circumstances and conditions in which such fellowship is possible? Concrete situations will help us to think into these questions as we consider various possible procedures.

II

In the next six sections we shall attempt to arrange a scale of possibilities in spiritual fellowship proceeding from a kind that requires no adaptation and hence realizes the minimum of mutual spiritual fellowship. At this end of the scale we may think of a Christian praying in the presence of a non-Christian but without changing his prayer in any special way because of the presence of an adherent of another faith. He is simply praying

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 129.

a normal Christian prayer for the other person. There is no attempt on the part of the Christian to enter into the Presence by the other's route—the adaptation is all the other way. This often happens when a missionary who believes that he knows the only true God prays for a non-Christian who is supposed to be ignorant of that God. There is little that could be called common worship here. Speaking of such a situation a missionary exclaimed, "I wanted to use the pronoun 'we,' to carry him with me into the Presence. I wanted to identify myself spiritually with him, and stand, as it were hand in hand, before the Supreme. Nothing less than that deserves to be called spiritual fellowship."

One objection to this type of prayer together is that expressions will very likely be used that will disturb any spirit of worship that may have been developed. Possibly it may be easier for a Christian to realize the reactions that some of his Christian phrases would awaken in a non-Christian with whom he might be praying, if he subjected himself to corporate meditation and prayer under the leadership of a believer in another faith. At one such meeting in Honolulu where serious-minded people considering world problems had come together, the Buddhist leader read two poems, in which occurred the following verses respectively:

> Then let us understand aright
> This teaching true and great
> And love the tiniest living thing
> For dear Lord Buddha's sake.

> One life, One law, One great eternal plan
> Uniting each to each in harmony—
> This mighty truth which our great Master found
> Alone can set us free.

The shrinking which most Christians feel at the introduction of such verses into their meditations would not be felt by intelligent Hindus. For them differences in name are immaterial; all names may be used indiscriminately for the absolute Reality. This appears broad and comprehensive; but Hinduism has paid dearly in loss of integrity of thought and vision. At any rate, there are certainly those who feel that they can never attain the desired common aspiration if jarring elements are left in the prayer or service.

III

This desire for truer spiritual fellowship leads to a second stage where the Christian leader attempts so to adapt his prayer that the wording will not offend his Hindu and Moslem friends, and so that presumably they can sincerely follow the prayer.

This type of common worship was attempted in a camp in India for the training of scoutmasters, among whom were representatives of many different religions. In the judgment of some the most piquant memory of the week in camp was connected with these evening prayers. Every night they built their camp-fire under the stars and when they had drunk their cocoa and finished their songs and their games, they stood in solemn silence, while the camp leader read a few short prayers. They then sang together, to a musical setting worthy of the words, the following good-night hymn:

Good-night!
  May the Great Father of us all
Hold us
  In His keeping
Till morning light appears.
  Good-night!

A missionary who was present reported[1] that those evening prayers were immensely impressive. The very fact of their creedal differences deepened for him the sense of the presence of the All-Father, to whom all alike are dear. As it happened, the leader was a Christian. If we at all feel that we should not enter into a relation that cannot be reciprocated, we are bound to ask whether they who were Christians would have been equally happy if they had been asked to yield their hearts to the spiritual leadership of a Hindu.

When, however, a Christian begins to change his prayer so as to make it more acceptable to a believer in another faith it is not always easy to know how far to go in the adjustment. For example, on the occasion of the death of King Edward VII the citizens of Lahore, India, arranged for a public memorial meeting which was to be closed with prayer. Though the committee in charge was made up almost wholly of Hindus and Moslems, they asked an outstanding missionary whom they greatly respected to take this closing prayer. He was, therefore, acting as a community representative. How far should he adhere to distinctively Christian terminology in such a prayer, and should he close it with the words, "in Christ's name"? Would it be right to end as does one Christian worker in the presence of mixed audiences—"We ask this in the name of all the greatest prophets and in the name of Jesus"? It might help to ask ourselves what we would want a Hindu or Moslem to do in the way of adjustment if he were leading.

The issue was presented very definitely to a Western visitor who dropped in one Sunday at the temple of the

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 125.

Brahmo Samaj in Calcutta.[1] There he met an Indian friend who was a professor in a local college, and a prominent member of the Samaj. While there the visitor was asked to conduct a service for the Brahmos some Sunday night. He was asked not only to preach but to lead them in their devotions. The only condition was that he should not end his prayers with the phrase "through Jesus Christ our Lord." The visitor as a known representative of Christianity in India did not accept the invitation.

This plan of adapting Christian prayers came up for appraisal in 1921 in connection with the London Missionary Society's work in Bangalore. Their high school, with an enrollment of six hundred, has one Moslem and six Hindu students to each Christian pupil. The principal, profoundly believing in the importance of worship, nevertheless felt that for most of his non-Christian pupils prayers in the name of Christ would be unreal and ineffective. He, therefore, drew up and published a book of prayers suffused with Christian spirit and content, but in which no specific mention was made of Christ. The aim was to make them such as a non-Christian could sincerely pray.

This was brought to the attention of the London Missionary Society, and the matter aroused considerable discussion extending over many months. A small minority urged that in view of the declared aim of the Society to proclaim the name of Christ they should not sanction the exclusion of his name from the daily worship in the schools of the Society. They feared that the Bangalore plan might encourage a false religiosity in the Hindus and Mohammedans and make it impossible

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 130.

to teach them that no man cometh unto the Father save through Him who is the way. While still insisting that the daily Bible teaching should be imperative for non-Christian pupils, they were willing that the opening worship (which according to their plan would be specifically Christian) should be voluntary.

The majority realized that such action would practically cause failure of any attempt to teach spiritual worship to their Hindu and Moslem pupils. In these schools and colleges Indian missionaries are dealing, not with a paganism whose absurdity is more than self-suspected by the people, but with strong and aggressive religions. In these days when Indian nationalism has made them supersensitive to everything that can be interpreted as denationalizing, few of them would voluntarily follow a prayer in the name of Christ.

In further support of the Bangalore plan it was urged that the use of the name of Christ by students who have not yet accepted him as Lord might lead to insincerity; that it might extend the tendency already seen in India to make Jesus Christ just another in the list of gods in the Indian pantheon; that to teach boys to worship God, the Father, is one of the best ways to bring them to understand the message of Jesus Christ, his Son; and that in just such prayers as those used at Bangalore Christ is, as a matter of fact, casting out the old gods.

In their final decision the London Missionary Society gave liberty of method to their Bangalore missionaries of whose evangelical loyalty they were assured. They expressed their opinion, however, that books of prayers for non-Christians should have in them a section containing prayers specially intended for the use of Christian students and of students approaching the Christian position, and that services which would be definitely

Christian should be held at frequent intervals. This would not only show the distinctively Christian character of the Society whose missionaries were responsible for publishing such books but would show non-Christian scholars a sphere of devotion with which they were not familiar.

IV

An attempt at still closer fellowship ventures to use carefully selected prayers from the sacred heritage of the various people participating, but retains the leadership in Christian hands. As long as a Christian conducts the worship he can be satisfied that nothing will be said to offend Christian sensibilities or convictions, even though the prayers be taken in whole or in part from non-Christian writers.

An attempt to make possible interconfessional fellowship in worship by the use of previously selected quotations from various scriptures has been made in India for the "International Fellowships." This is an interesting movement which has been growing in India during the past six years and includes Hindus (Brahmans, non-Brahmans and members of the depressed classes), Moslems, Parsees, Arya Samajists, Jews and Christians. Their aim is to deepen the sense of the reality and love of God and they bring together on a cooperative basis people belonging to different religions without calling on any one to give up what he considers valuable in his own religion. Groups have been formed in thirteen of the larger cities and well-known Christians, including missionaries, have identified themselves with the effort. A distinguished missionary compiled for the Fellowship a set of prayers and readings from the Bible, Koran, Bhagavad Gita and the Songs of Zoroaster and this has

been used in many of their meetings.[1] All are asked to make the following prayer from Zoroaster their own in meditation:

With bended knees, with hands outstretched, I pray to
Thee, my Lord,
Oh Invisible Benevolent Spirit!
Vouchsafe to me in this hour of joy
All righteousness of action, all wisdom of the Good Mind,
That I may thereby bring joy to the Soul of Creation.

All are asked to think of the great words of Buddha, and so to steep themselves in these words that the thought becomes part of the fiber of their being:

Never by hate can hatreds cease;
Love only ends them evermore;
Love only brings all strife to peace;
This is the true, the ancient lore.

As failure stands out before their eyes, it is suggested that all come in penitence and self-surrender to Him who alone can cleanse and renew them, using some such prayer as Tukaram's:

I am a mass of sin;
Thou art all purity;
Yet Thou must take me as I am,
And bear my load for me.

Me death has all consumed,
In Thee all power abides;
All else forsaking, at Thy Feet
Thy servant Tuka hides.

[1] The International Fellowship Retreat at Poona, October, 1925, pp. 42-50.

The 94th *Sura* of the Koran is used to suggest thankfulness to God for his patient forbearance and love to us in spite of all our failure, and for the mercies which we know he will still show us in the days to come:

The Lord hath not forsaken thee, neither hath He been displeased;
And surely the future shall be better for thee than the past;
And in the end shall thy Lord be bounteous to thee, and thou be satisfied.
Did He not find thee an orphan, and gave thee a home?
And found thee erring, and guided thee?
And found thee needy, and enriched thee?
As to the orphan, therefore, wrong him not;
And as to him that asketh of thee, chide him not away;
And as for the favours of thy Lord, tell them abroad.

A prayer from Tagore's "Gitanjali" suggests the quiet counting of the cost of the pledge afresh to Love's service:

This is my prayer to Thee, my Lord—strike, strike at the root of penury in my heart,
Give me the strength lightly to bear my joys and sorrows.
Give me the strength to make my love fruitful in service.
Give me the strength to raise my mind high above daily trifles.
And give me the strength to surrender my strength to Thy Will in love.

Since self-interest has been the predominating principle among men, many who have sought to teach and practice the opposite principle of love have had to suffer, often to die. The Cross of Christ, it is pointed

out, stands for all ages as the very type of how the world rewards Love, and how Love meets the world's hatred. The participants in this liturgy are asked therefore, to ponder on Love's invitation:

"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." "Whosoever will not take up his cross and come after me, he cannot be my disciple." "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God."

We have made only these brief and detached extracts from the five meditations used in the Fellowship meetings; but they may enable the reader to judge as to the wisdom of such attempts. Whether a service thus prepared and scrutinized by a Christian would be satisfactory to other participants would be a question—hence the next position.

v

A fourth plan attempts to minimize all disturbing expressions or jarring ideas by having the common prayers not only selected or composed in advance but also approved by all the participants or by their representatives. For example, an attempt was made in China to use prayers from different religions but so edited beforehand as to give offense to none. Yuan Shih Kai had asked the followers of all religions to observe a special day of prayer for the new Republic. In Tientsin there was a united service under a committee of arrangements composed entirely of Chinese Buddhists, Con-

fucianists, Moslems, and Christians. Practically the whole service, including the prayers, was prepared by two Christian pastors and then submitted to the whole committee for adoption. Hence the liberal representatives of each religion could conscientiously cooperate both in thanksgiving and petition. It is said that the spirit of the gathering was deeply devotional.

The attempt to get approval in advance is again illustrated by the following prayer for mutual appreciation and understanding which was prepared under the joint authorship of a Roman Catholic priest, a Jewish rabbi, and a Protestant minister:

"Almighty God, we, who are members of different races and faiths, desire together to acknowledge thy fatherhood and our kinship with each other. In our difference we find that many of our hopes, our fears, our aspirations, are one. Thou art our Father, and we are thy children. We are heartily sorry for the mists of fear, envy, hatred, suspicion, and greed which have blinded our eyes and thrust us asunder. May the light that comes from Thee scatter these mists, cleanse our hearts and give health to our spirits. Teach us to put away all bitterness and to walk together in the ways of human friendship. Open our eyes to see that as nature abounds in variation so differences in human beings make for richness in the common life. May we give honor where honor is due—regardless of race, color, or circumstance. Deepen our respect for unlikeness and our eagerness to understand one another. Through the deeper unities of the spirit in sympathy, insight, and cooperation may we transcend our differences. May we gladly share with each other our best gifts and together seek for a human world fashioned in good will under thy guidance. Amen."

VI

Many think that an advance in fairness and mutuality is made when each religionist is encouraged to express himself freely according to his own judgment of what is fitting. Such persons are not content to use merely a few selected words borrowed from non-Christian writers but carefully scrutinized and expurgated to insure that no non-Christian elements survive. Such persons desire their non-Christian friends to come with all that these friends hold dear, surrendering nothing at all, in order that all may stand together before God. Behind this procedure is the conviction that if common worship is to be sincere, it should be reciprocal. It is held that in such procedure there need be no compromise and may be real fellowship.

In the International Fellowships of India, mentioned in a previous section, worship is conducted sometimes by a Hindu, sometimes by a Moslem, or by a Parsee, or by a Christian.

Hymns are sung at most of these Fellowship meetings. At one the Christians led in singing "O God, our help in ages past"; a Hindu sang one beginning "Oh, Sadguru! Oh Lord of Love! Oh Lord the bestower of gifts on all"; and the Christian leader sang the following hymn from a "Hindu Book of Devotional Songs":

Into the midst of this human sea am I born, O God, Do Thou hold my hand and draw me out of this sea.

When I think of the moment of death, O God, my heart fails. I forget all.

Do Thou come and live in the blossoming of my heart and strengthen me.

It is impossible to describe the vagaries of Illusion. Do Thou, O God, save me from all Illusion.

Here am I, lost in a dark forest, not able to find my way out.
Do Thou hold my hand and lead me out of it by the straight path.
When you find a way that seems easy and straight,
Stop and think, for the way is not easy and straight,
But narrow and difficult.
When you pass through difficulties,
Then you will be able to see God face to face.

These Fellowships are founded on the belief that the difficulties of internationalism can be overcome only when men meet on a religious basis with a common faith in the guidance and help of God. It is the religious link which holds the members together. People unite in the work of these Fellowships because they desire the reign of God on earth and want to see spiritual values established in all human relations. No effort is made to form a new religion, each is expected to enrich his own. At the various meetings political, social, religious, and economic questions are freely discussed in a religious spirit. The belief is that when problems are discussed in a religious atmosphere these have more meaning and value than they otherwise would.

Those who have shared in these meetings would be the first to recognize the experimental character of what they did, and that we do not have a common terminology that makes interconfessional worship easy. But is it the kind of experiment that ought to be made? Will it lead to good or evil? Is it an experiment in which we ourselves would wish to join?

The question also arises as to what they were really doing. Were they really all in touch with the one true God in spite of their theological differences? Or were they really lifting up their hearts to half a dozen differ-

ent deities, of whom only one can be real and the rest dreams or nothingness? If the former, does it follow that theological differences can be ignored? If the latter, are we to conclude that an experience which seemed so good, was in reality wrong?

Many experiments at common worship are being made in which each active participant is given freedom to express himself as he sees fit. We give a few examples.

At the International Conference on Pan-Pacific Relations held in Chicago, 1927, a united service of the great religions was arranged. Its aim was the creation of a sense of a common purpose in the establishment of harmony and good-will among all men. The opening sentences were by a Hindu; the responsive readings by a Christian; the scripture reading by a Buddhist; the prayer by a Moslem; and the benediction by a Confucianist.

At the Indian Students' Union in London a meeting was held in connection with the Indian delegation from India to Africa. A Hindu prayed in Sanskrit for world peace and prosperity. A Moslem prayed that God might bring a righteous solution to the racial animosity in South Africa. A Christian followed. A manifest spirit of devotion and prayer was present and many asked that they might more often have such gatherings for religious fellowship.

The Central Student Y. M. C. A. of Manila desired to celebrate a Universal Day of Prayer and make it truly as "universal" as possible in that community. There were Moro and Igorot students living in the dormitory of the Association. These were invited to take part. They first refused, saying that they were not Christians. But they were at last persuaded to come on condition that they might pray in their own way. Those

who took part in the service witnessed to real fellowship and to a consciousness of worship. However, there were objections by some, on the ground that those who had given the money for the building were evangelical Christians.

Among those who attended the service of a day of prayer in a Chinese city was an old Confucian scholar. He is not a Christian, but has at various times been deeply impressed by the spirit of Christianity. He was profoundly stirred at this service, and went home meditating upon the question as to why Protestant Christians should be the ones to propose such a service of prayer. His consideration brought him to the conviction that all people should be praying for the welfare of the nation; that Confucianists, Buddhists, Taoists, Mohammedans, Catholics, and Protestants should all join in a common service, and should lead their followers to pray continually for their common country.

He came to the pastor of the Independent Chinese Church and asked him to help in organizing such a service. The pastor did not feel he could take the lead in a movement which might be interpreted as a step toward the union of religions, but he did feel that he and other Protestant pastors could be present as representatives of Christianity. After nearly a month of planning, the meeting was held. Seats were provided for two thousand, and the place was packed throughout the service. The audience was a mixture of all religions. The Roman Catholics were not there officially, but sent word that they would hold special prayer services in the cathedral—from which the republican flag floated during the afternoon. Neither did the Moslem leaders come, though they sent an official representative to speak for them,

saying that they themselves would conduct special prayer in the mosques at the hour of the meeting.

The presiding officer of the meeting was a Methodist pastor. After his introductory speech, explaining the origin and purpose of gathering, applause was started. He checked it at once by explaining that applause was not fitting in a service of prayer. After this neither the singing by the Anglo-Chinese Girls' School, nor music by the Governor's band, nor the addresses received any applause. The whole service was conducted in a dignified and reverential spirit. Addresses were made by a Christian pastor, a Moslem, a Buddhist, and a Confucianist. None of them were sectarian, but all recognized one Supreme Being, who should be the ruler of nations as well as of individuals; and that true patriotism must recognize this Supreme Power and be built on the high morality of true worshipers of God. Prayers were not conducted in the ordinary way, but by the leader reading and explaining the printed prayers which were in the hands of all the people who stood repeating in unison brief responses. The first of these prayers was written by the Confucian organizer. The second was prepared chiefly by two Christian leaders.

VII

Many would place on the extreme right of the scale which we are making the fellowship of silence as the plan best suited to secure common worship where there is fear that no one set of spoken words can serve all parties.

This method was used at the Institute of Pacific Relations at Honolulu, in 1925. The Executive Committee recognized the far-reaching significance of the problems

which confronted this Institute, the need for guidance and enlightenment, and that many would wish, in the spirit of aspiration and worship, to join in a period of common meditation over the day's work and the world's welfare. They arranged, therefore, for a period of daily meditation of about fifteen minutes in a small, natural, outdoor amphitheater. With members from various cultures and faiths, the time was given wholly to silent prayer and meditation preceded only by a brief reading from some sacred or other inspiring writing. It was hoped that this would enable each, within the ample range of silence, to use this period according to the manner of his upbringing and would, through this fellowship of heart, further that temper and spirit in which the solution of large problems might become possible. The leaders were chosen from the various religious faiths.

An interesting instance of uniting in silent prayer occurred in 1914 at the Caves of Machpelah, where according to tradition Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as well as Sarah, Leah, and Rebecca are buried. Ordinarily no Jew or Christian could enter as the caves were under Moslem control. It occurred to America's representative, the Hon. Henry Morgenthau, to use his privilege as ambassador of visiting the historic spot. He took various Jewish and Christian friends with him, making a party of some twenty-six people. As they faced the tomb a Christian in the party remarked that here were three religions each revering Abraham as prophet, and suggested fellowship in prayer. Then, bareheaded, they had what Ambassador Morgenthau describes as one of the most precious experiences of his life, as they devoutly prayed to their common Father.

A similar need, felt in common, for religious expression came to a holiday group in northern India. A pro-

fessor in a Christian college had taken a group of Hindu, Moslem, and Christian students to the site of the ancient city of Taxila. When they reached the "Chir Tope" and were standing on the *pradaksina,* or sacred pathway, where thousands of Buddhist pilgrims in the old days had performed their circuit, the professor suggested that they should all stand in their places for five minutes of meditation and prayer. In this way they sought to do justice to the highest insight of those ancient Buddhists and to have a certain fellowship with them.

A different kind of silent fellowship is exemplified by the League of Prayer for schoolboys in North India. In that League, Moslems and Hindus are members as well as Christians and on the same terms. Every member must sign the statement: "I believe in God and in the value of prayer. I desire and intend to pray to God at least once a day from my heart for all men, for my country, my friends and myself." It is reported that here in a singularly happy way real spiritual fellowship is being attained. As a matter of fact, the secretary is a Christian missionary. It might raise a problem for the promoters if the League wished to elect a non-Christian to this office.

Few would disapprove if a Christian, standing on the central altar of the Temple of Heaven in Peking, gave way to impulse and silently prayed. But how about the missionary who, frequently visiting Delhi, went each time to the Jumma Musjid (Great Mosque) for prayer? This is a beautiful and inspiring specimen of religious architecture. Three monumental stairways, each of forty great stone steps, lead up through imposing gateways to the great court where ten thousand of the faithful can bathe in its fountains and kneel together before domes and minarets of marble, porphyry, and onyx.

There this missionary, surrounded by the mosque's majesty and beauty, engaged in prayer much as one in New York might go out of his way to get the ennobling inspiration for prayer in the Roman Catholic cathedral on Fifth Avenue. The missionary chose a retired corner of the mosque and did not assume a posture that would make manifest his purpose. If he had prayed openly he might have been misunderstood. It would be helpful to work out just what deductions an intelligent and educated observer could justly draw if this Christian had prayed openly in the mosque.

VIII

In considering which of these six types of spiritual fellowship—if any—one should encourage, various things should be taken into account.

In the first place, it must be acknowledged that there are special occasions when common worship meets a real need. At Stockholm common worship on the part of the various Christian bodies grew naturally out of their consciousness of common need. Nationalism is a dominant enough interest in Ceylon for Hindus and Christians to desire common worship in connection with their congress.

When 35,000 people were trapped and burned to death after the great earthquake in Japan it seemed fitting to have a common funeral service in which Shinto, Buddhist and Christian cooperated, each performing their rites separately and consecutively in the order given.

If a Child Welfare Center is to be dedicated in Almora, India, they may want a Brahman pundit to offer prayer in Sanskrit; a Moslem maulvi to pray in Urdu; and a Christian clergyman, in Hindi. This chapter has had

many other illustrations of a common or community crisis or project where a corporate approach to Divinity was sought. It is perfectly natural for human folk to believe that their God is interested or can be made interested in what most deeply concerns themselves. Hence the impulse to corporate expression of thankfulness or petition. Some would confine attempts at common worship to such special occasions rather than pushing for it when there is no real hunger for fellowship beyond the abstract belief that it is well to "get together."

A great common experience may draw people together in worship. The American University of Beirut during the four war years was cut off from the homeland, was under pressure and even hostility from the authorities, with difficulty secured maintenance funds or verbal credit, ministered to those who fell starving in the streets alongside the college wall, was busy and shorthanded in the administration of education. Under these conditions association in worship between Christians, Moslems, Jews, Druzes, and Bahais steadily increased.

One's decision, however, as to the nature and extent of desirable interreligious fellowship will depend in part on what we conceive non-Christian religious experience to be. Scholars have done much more in the way of making non-Christian scriptures and thought available than they have in studying and making known just what are the mental states of a non-Christian as he worships. Few studies have been made of the exact nature of the psychological conditions that would make it easy or difficult, as the case might be, for an intelligent Christian to worship with intelligent and thoughtful men of other faiths in their local temples or shrines. What, for example, is the difference between a Christian praying in the name of Christ, a Moslem praying in the name of

Mohammed, and a Hindu praying in the name of Krishna? In so far as the name is added to a series of requests as a magical incantation of such potency that one can hope thereby to swing all Power to the doing of one's will, the experience is very likely the same in each case. But "name" denotes manifested nature. And prayer that is consonant with the manifested nature of Krishna or Mohammed is certainly different from that in accord with the manifested nature of Christ. The Christian who is resting his soul on the Lord Jesus Christ is having a different spiritual experience from the Moslem who prostrates himself before the Unapproachable Majesty, and from the Hindu absorbed in the contemplation of an Indescribable Absolute.

But it may be said that in any Christian congregation there are those whose grasp of God is less clear and true than that of others. Inequality of spiritual experience does not prevent a mother praying with her child. For many prayer is an opening up of heart and life to the abundant inflow of God that his will may have place in all that concerns them. But even in a Christian church are such to wait until they find those who can pray on this plane before venturing on the experience of corporate prayer? The fact that for Korean Christians their past lives and ancestral heritage make it almost certain that their present conception of God is different from his own does not quench the thrill that comes over a Western visitor as he joins with them in prayer.

Hence, if your conception of the difference between the worship experience of the Christian and of the non-Christian is that the Christian sees more clearly and approaches more nearly the same one Reality than the

latter, then a degree of communion and fellowship should be possible. If, however, you believe that the non-Christian is in touch with nothing or worse than nothing, then a sense of common worship would be difficult.

Furthermore, our decision will depend in part upon our conception of the efficacy of non-Christian prayer. Where a devout worshiper, living up to such light as he has, in full confidence seeks Divine guidance, do we believe that it will wholly be denied him?

Concrete situations again will help us to fix our thought. A missionary, being one of the very few Christian delegates to the Indian National Congress, printed five thousand copies of a set of prayers and distributed them to all delegates and visitors as they entered the tent. What was the philosophy of prayer that must lie back of such an action? Does God draw near to every humble contrite soul, by whatever name he calls his faith, who in genuineness opens up his life to God's incoming?

Consider another situation. In the summer of 1925 the Institute of Pacific Relations held its first session in Honolulu. The following prayer was circulated to the various churches of the city by Christians interested in the Institute:

"Make here a new beginning in the affairs of men and nations, O Thou who makest wars to cease in all the world and who bindest together the hearts of men in friendly cooperation.

We look forward with humility and expectancy to the Institute that is gathering men and women from the Pacific lands. May the spirit of forgiveness, love and hope be abroad in these days of Conference. Touch the imaginations of all with the larger vision of brotherhood.

Help the delegates to keep quiet, unhurried minds, ready for new revelations of the Spirit, and equal to the large tasks before them.

May thy blessing be upon our friends from other lands. Help them to feel the genuineness of our desire for justice and cooperation. May our welcome be warm and sincere and free from all taint of selfishness and distrust. Amen."

This prayer was not circulated to the Buddhist temples of the city, although technically the Institute was not Christian, and non-Christians were coming as full members. If the question had been raised, should one have favored asking the Buddhist priests to circulate this prayer among their adherents?

As a matter of fact, the leaders of the Hongwanji Temple in Honolulu in response to the Governor's annual proclamation have a thanksgiving service. They believe in encouraging a thankful disposition although it is of an impersonal sort and not thankfulness to any being. Adoration they believe in, but it is adoration to their great teacher, not to God. In their last edition of orders for ceremonies for use in temples [1] they made a place for "thought waves," for while they do not believe in prayer as petition to God, they do believe in the power of directed thought. If Honolulu's central church were arranging for citywide prayer for the schools, for temperance, for peace on armistice day, or for any other object of common welfare, ought they to invite the Buddhist leaders to enlist their constituency also? How should a Christian regard Buddhist prayer such as has just been described? If the highest official Christian body communicated with the highest Buddhist

[1] The "Vade Mecum," p. 8.

authorities, suggesting that their respective constituencies have a day of prayer for some common object, what would be the religious implications of this act? Upon what principles should one place a bound to one's cooperation? Is sincerity the test, if so should one be willing to cooperate in prayer with sincere Thibetans who put prayer wheels in streams or where the wind can turn them?

Possibly we may agree that when a man through prayer merely endeavors to get God subserviently to do what the man wants him to do, this is typically and instinctively pagan under whatever religious name it is done. But when a man says "Thy will be done," or when his object is not that God shall serve man, but man God, or when he consciously tries to keep himself inwardly open to the resources of spiritual power, then may we say his prayer is to that extent "Christian" whatever faith is professed? We may remember that a certain man of Cæsarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian band, found that his prayer and his alms had come up for a memorial before God (Acts 10:1-4).

It will be interesting to note the position taken on the issue of this chapter by the Roman Catholic Church. Their Canon which would apply to mixed religious services reads as follows:

"It is unlawful for Catholics to assist actively in any way at, or to take part in, the religious services of non-Catholics. A passive or merely material presence may be tolerated, for reasons of civil duty or honor, at funerals, weddings, and similar celebrations, provided no danger of perversion or scandal arises from this assistance. In doubtful cases the reason for assisting must be grave, and recognized as such by the bishop."

The commentary on this Canon says that the reason why the Roman Church has always forbidden such participation in the religious services of non-Catholics is the intimate conviction that she herself is the only true Church of Christ. A secondary reason for this prohibition is the quasi-approbation of non-Catholic worship which lies in a Catholic's participation therein and which at the same time is an external profession of faith. Another reason is the "scandal" which may be given to other Roman Catholics who may note this mixture of worship and see the deference paid to non-Catholic ministers and functions. Finally there is the danger of perversion, or of gradually increasing religious indifference, when the faithful freely and indiscriminately participate in heretical religious services.

Even visits to the churches or temples of non-Catholics is regulated. The Holy Office has decided that Roman Catholics may be permitted to enter non-Catholic places of worship merely from curiosity and without participating in the services. Such visits are permitted only provided they are not a sign of religious indifference, and that the public does not regard them as a sign of an interior conviction that there is no distinction between Catholics and non-Catholics.[1]

One may enter upon any one of these six types of fellowship with a variety of motives. Some are eager for anything that draws mankind together and believe with Carlyle that you never get people together until you "get them to look up." Such people would likely say that the road to peace and unity—whether at Lausanne or at a World's Parliament of Religion—is not the road of controversy, but the path of prayer.

[1] C. A. Bachofen, "A Commentary on Canon Law," Vol. 6, p. 192.

There are many who believe that if men of different faiths are to be brought together hearts must be touched as well as minds convinced, and that this is helped by the common use of what is akin in their devotional life. The usual way of approaching another faith is through a comparison of ideas. It is thought that there are rich new possibilities if emphasis is placed on the springs of life and devotion as shared in some form of common worship.

Attempts at common worship have their symbolic value, as does the fixed custom in various American cities of Episcopalians and Presbyterians, for example, having a union Thanksgiving service, or of the celebration of one Lord's Supper each year participated in by the white and the colored congregations of the given community. In some such way there might be occasional attempts at common worship in order to help all to realize the underlying unity of the whole human race.

Others are most conscious of a need for growth and truth, and they want to join in humble prayerful search with other seekers after God. Some have as their dominant desire a craving for spiritual relation with all men and for the expression of fellow feeling at its highest in the presence of a common Father. They want to cooperate with the spiritual forces about them, whose source they gladly recognize as the Spirit of the one living God. For them such spiritual fellowship seems to make God so much more wonderful and universal—even in this worship he is understanding each, meeting the needs of each, loving and caring for each as for all people all over the world. The same Father is bending in tenderness over each as he prays and as he uses the symbolism that he knows.

Still others have as their sole reason the awakening of

aspirations in people's hearts that will be found to be realizable only through Christ's power, thus leading people who do not believe in Jesus Christ nearer to him. Such sharers of experience have absolutely no fear that he may be belittled or defeated in being held up to the world. Some may question the wisdom of the type of fellowship used, but we cannot too definitely insist that the motive may be wholly and loyally Christian.

We do not consider any such partial fellowship as we have been considering the ultimate ideal. It is but an intermediary step for particular ends. History does not give any encouragement to a policy of eclecticism. As long as we human folk are divided occasional gestures of good-will and sharing of experience may be wise, but sooner or later all should come to know and to experience their common Source of Life. Under proper safeguards, and with full realization of the risks, spiritual relations between those of different faiths may well have a place in bringing about that final consummation.

Certain conditions must be met by anyone hoping for significant common worship on the part of believers in different faiths. Such worship both demands and creates a sense of intimacy. To unite in worship is to unite at the highest expression of human personality. Sincerity is, therefore, absolutely essential. Fellowship in private between two friends of divergent faiths is usually easier than fellowship in public. Complete identity of creed is not a necessary prerequisite for a very real and deep fellowship, but sympathetic appreciation of the other's point of view is most desirable. Hence common worship is more possible where the different participants share the same level of culture and of education. Furthermore, common worship may be just as difficult for a Moslem or Hindu when conducted

in a Christian church, as it would be for us in a temple or mosque. For this reason it may be best to begin with some neutral building or by getting some quiet and beautiful spot out of doors where one's thoughts would naturally be led to God.

All should be on the alert to guard against religious degeneration, for just as Gresham's law is said to hold in economics, bad money driving out the good when both circulate, so lower religious practice may drive out the higher in groups that are not spiritually alive.

IX

Serious difficulties and risks may accompany attempts at common worship. One kind of difficulty is illustrated by an invitation that came to Christian leaders in Korea. A few years ago a large Shinto shrine was dedicated on a sacred mountain near the capital. The managers of the Christian schools were invited to bring their entire student body to join other students in the ceremony. High officials assured the Christians that the exercises would not include worship of the spirit of the Emperor, and yet most of the common people among both the Japanese and Koreans regarded it as worship since Shinto priests carried on the services. A meeting of missionaries was called to decide how the invitation (which was almost an order) should be treated and whether or not it was consistent with Christianity to engage in this ceremony. Some Japanese missionaries attended, but no Korean missionary nor students of Korean mission schools.

A specific problem in worship faced a visitor to Honolulu after an evening service in the Church of the Crossroads. The school population of this city is nearly

thirty thousand. Young people of all races are growing up with English as their primary, if not exclusive, language. Further, they are learning to associate without regard to racial lines. They are restless with the old-fashioned ways and language of their parents. It is expected that this process will go on at an increasing rate. The Church of the Crossroads is one answer to this religious and social situation. Its aim is to build a program of training, including worship, thinking, work, and fellowship, which will meet the needs of intelligent young people of all races who are meeting real life perplexities.

One of these perplexities was brought to the visiting preacher after an evening meeting in the church. It is a problem typical of many. A young lady said that her father, a Japanese who had himself become very little Americanized, is willing that she should attend this Christian church made up of English-speaking Japanese, Chinese, and Koreans. But he also wants her to go periodically, especially at the anniversaries of her mother's death, to the Buddhist temple. On inquiry it is found that she does not understand the Japanese sermon at the temple nor does she understand the meaning of the smoking incense before Buddha's image nor of the other symbols. "Is there anything wrong in going to both places?" is her question.

This situation reminds one of the request made by Naaman to the prophet Elisha. Naaman had become convinced that there was no God in all the earth, but in Israel. However, as captain of the host, he saw that there might be complications when he returned to the king in Syria. "In this thing the Lord pardon thy servant, that when my master goeth into the house of Rimmon to worship there, and he leaneth on my hand, and I bow myself in the house of Rimmon; when I bow

down myself in the house of Rimmon, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing. And he [Elisha] said unto him, Go in peace."[1]

Some would tell the Japanese girl to continue as she had been doing until such a time as she should feel that there was some inconsistency in her attendance at both places of worship. They would urge her to begin to study each religion, finding out just what the Buddhist sermons were and what the significance of the incense is. Others would have no hesitation in considering the question closed, pointing out the sternness and hardness of Christian loyalty. They would recall that Jesus said "he that is not willing to leave father and mother for my sake is not worthy of me. . . . Take up your cross daily and follow me."

There is the danger that such common worship may seem staged or artificial. The Moslem call to prayer has often deeply moved me as I have listened to it floating across the housetops from some Eastern minaret:

> God is great! God is great!
> God is great! God is great!
> Come to prayer! Come to prayer!
> Come to salvation! Come to salvation!
> Prayer is better than sleep!
> Prayer is better than sleep!

But this same call seems to have little more than educational value when given in Arabic with Moslem intonation in some Western congregation. A prayer in Sanskrit, even though afterwards translated into English by a Hindu, may not produce an atmosphere of worship. The moment any worshiper doubts the objective truth in-

[1] II Kings 5:18-19.

volved in the prayers, or questions the sincerity of those participating in the worship, it becomes unprofitable for that one—a playing with religion.

Common participation in religious ritual is attempting fellowship at the most difficult point for most people. Recall the long discussions over the proposed changes in the English Prayer Book; or note how a rural congregation is likely to resent any change in its order of worship; and this will help one to realize that adjustment in habits, forms, and ritual is most difficult. Often variety in form, in ceremony, and in symbolism seems to present insuperable obstacles to common worship. How are we to feel the Moslem's sense of the fitness of ablutions before prayer in order that he may be ceremonially clean? How are we to know that when as many as four or five Moslems gather for prayer the one most learned in sacred scriptures is put at their head and the others "pray behind" him? How shall adjustment be made with their ingrained habit of turning toward Mecca? Only as we get beneath these forms of expression to the real experience can we worship together easily. I must be able to reach my God through another's forms of worship if this worship is to mean any real communion for me with the Divine. Otherwise the service is not worship, but education; and I become an observer and listener, rather than a real participant. Hence any great success in interconfessional worship will require much practice until the novelty of strange forms has disappeared.

But the difficulty in part lies deeper than mere form or ritual. In all the more advanced religions the kind of ritual which they have is largely determined by the kind of God in which the worshipers believe. A person's worship reveals his idea of God. Hence it is not easy

to have the same ritual for Jehovah, Allah, and Brahma. In fact, it is often easier to change the content which people put into the term "God" or to alter other religious values than to get people to adjust themselves to a change of ritual.

There are unquestionably certain aspirations common in Christianity and other faiths. Should we aim steadily to increase the common inheritance of spiritual treasures, and encourage the actual use of this common store? The Lord's Prayer has often proved itself capable of being used in common worship. In Chicago, in 1893, representatives of all the great historic non-Christian faiths for seventeen successive mornings rose and stood for a moment of silent meditation after which the audience joined in the devout recital of this prayer.

But when it is suggested that Christians adopt something from the non-Christian heritage, the ideal of increasing the common store of spiritual treasure does not always seem so attractive. Each chapter of a certain union mission study-book on India was to begin with a prayer. Only reluctantly did the committee in charge permit the inclusion for devotional purposes of the classic Sanskrit prayer, "From the unreal lead me to the Real, from darkness lead me to Light, from death lead me to Immortality."

The same issue was faced a few years ago when a new hymnal was being assembled in India. The question arose as to whether certain hymns by Tagore should be included. The Western Christians on the committee were for the most part against the proposition, while the Indians were almost unanimously for it. The hymnbook eventually included these hymns by Tagore, but only after overcoming considerable opposition. Some missionaries censured the committee and banned the

hymns in any churches under their control. Others regarded them as among the finest in the collection and encouraged their use. It did not disturb them that the poet's idealism was not couched in the terms of Christian theology, nor did they feel they should forego advocating hymns that brought the finer sentiments of human life within the reach and understanding even of the ignorant villagers of Bengal.

The absence of common terminology is a very real difficulty. As we saw early in this chapter, it may not be easy for us to join in any prayer addressed to Brahma, Varuna, Indra, Rudra, or Maruta any more than one with an Oriental religious heritage may be helped by being led to think of cherubim and seraphim as crying continually unto God. Words, and especially these great religious terms, have their own connotations with which deep emotions are associated. Possibly we can develop an interconfessional terminology which will overcome the jar now felt when terms are used from whose historic meaning we find ourselves shrinking. Portions of the most devotional literature will undoubtedly become the common inheritance of all children of God without limit of race or creed.

But let us not imagine that the problem is so simple as merely getting a common terminology. Shall we pass without question the opening sentence of a prayer by one who has just returned from Christian work in the Near East, "O Thou Who art called Allah by some; Jahweh by others; and the Father by still others"? Is he acknowledging no more than that God must not be identified with man's interpretation of God? Certain Hindu women made the assertion: "You say Christ and we say Krishna; it is all the same." Would you react as did the Christian so addressed? Believing from her

talks with them that they had mainly in their minds the popular Krishna legends, and that their assertion was based mainly on the common Hindu conception that differences in name are immaterial, the Christian implored them by the love they had for her as a friend never to mention these names together in her presence.

Of this we may be sure: it makes a tremendous difference how we envisage the God to whom we pray. "As the God is, so is the worshiper," says a Sanskrit proverb. And hence it seemed worth while to the early Roman Catholic missionaries in China to contend bitterly among themselves for over a hundred years for one or the other of two possible Chinese terms for God. If Hindus think they can best speak of the Great Unseen as IT, they must have a vastly different experience from those who believe that the IT may be more appropriately spoken of as HE. We know enough not to equate Jahweh and God; for Jahweh is the Hebrew name for the primitive tribal *numen* of the Hebrews and did not begin to take on the attributes associated with our word "God" until the later prophetic period. We are careful not to credit the doing ascribed in the Pentateuch to Jahweh to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Similarly with other faiths, the characteristics of their gods are in general so different from the Christian God as to make them distinct beings.

In hearing ascriptions of praise or prayer to Vishnu, Siva, Kali, or any other name for deity which has rich historic content, we should remember that any idea fraught with emotion and accepted into one's inmost self begins to work. Canon Streeter tells us [1] that the essence of idolatry lies, not in the setting up of some graven

[1] B. H. Streeter, "Reality," pp. 300, 301.

image in a temple, but in the setting up before the mind's eye of any idea of God which is lower than the highest that our capacities or those of our age can grasp; and he says that idolatry is wrong, not because it is an affront to God but because it is an injury to man. The issue involved in common worship is not, therefore, one of mere terminology, but also of the working of one of the fundamental laws of the nature of the mind. What really matters is the vision of God that has been inwardly appropriated and is at work molding one's physical well-being, one's temperament, one's whole outlook on men and things. Very great differences exist between religions, and nothing will be gained by obscuring such differences.

Summarizing, we may say that genuine worship with those of other faiths is a venture not without serious risks, a high attainment reached through varied difficulties, an expression of human unity under a common Father, and a symbol, we hope, of a Kingdom still to be.

CHAPTER II

THE USE OF OTHER SACRED SCRIPTURES

I

THE work of many scholars has made it possible for us to approach other scriptures with a knowledge and a sympathy hardly possible to past decades. There is evidence that some should be on their guard lest they fall into the rôle of professional sympathizers or curious sentimentalists. There is naturally a reaction from the period when many looked upon all non-Christian religion as from the devil. But one's sense of scientific accuracy is violated by a shallow broad-mindedness that goes to the other extreme. If at one time there was lack of discrimination in painting non-Christian faiths as wholly black, there can be today a similar lack of discrimination in painting them wholly white. The latter tendency may seem more gracious, but it scarcely has more of truth.

The growing accessibility of other scriptures develops a bewildering set of practical issues around the question as to just what use, if any, should be made of scriptures other than our own. The World's Conference of Young Men's Christian Associations at Helsingfors in 1926 used a devotional service prepared by a noted Indian Christian leader. It was a seven-page pamphlet with one full page for silent meditation from the "Gitanjali" and other writings by Rabindranath Tagore. At the annual

meeting of the National Christian Council of China in 1926, a well-known Chinese Christian made impressive use of selections from the Chinese Classics in his devotional talks, making vivid the rich possibilities in the spiritual heritage of the Chinese people. At the national convention of the Young Men's Christian Association of China, also in 1926, a Chinese Christian professor gave a series of talks dealing with the religious heritage of China in Taoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, ending with an address on the unique values in Christianity which he found in the life and experience of Jesus himself. These three concrete instances reveal a significant tendency on the part of nationals to take into sympathetic account the religious heritage of their respective lands. The query naturally arises as to whether this is a movement that should be encouraged.

A Christian monastery has been started at Nanking, China, by a Norwegian in a special effort to place Christianity before Buddhist priests. Selections from Buddhist scriptures which are in harmony with the Christian message are read at services along with passages from the Bible. The endeavor is to find points of contact through truths which are recognized by all, and on this basis to give a positive and constructive message. Favorable comment on this work has been made by many Christian leaders in China. Here the Buddhist scriptures are being used for a particular purpose with a particular class.

There are many practical situations in which action seems to imply recognition of the authority and inspiration of other scriptures. A Christian is attempting to sell portions of the Bible to the Moslem group before him. They are hesitant in buying. He knows nineteen passages in the Koran which refer to the Gospels, and

knows that the sales will be increased if they are reminded that the Koran speaks favorably of the Bible. Shall the missionary use their belief in the authority of the Koran in order to increase Bible sales? Shall he also quote from it in order to substantiate facts in the life of Jesus?

The Nile Mission Press has for many years been issuing a series of tracts or sermonettes for Moslems. Is it wise to base each sermon on two texts, one from the Koran and one from the Bible? A theft has been committed in the Moslem hostel of an Eastern college. Suspicion rests on one student, but he denies all connection with the incident. Shall the Christian superintendent, knowing a common practice of the land, ask the student to swear to his innocence on the Koran and thus obtain a confession?

An increasing number of writers[1] are culling from the various sacred books material for what some call "leaves of the greater Bible," hoping thus to provide sources suitable for scripture readings and prayers. Such passages are expected to produce an attitude of service and devotion in worshipers. In each of the five hundred student rooms of International House, New York, has been placed a thousand-page volume made up of selections from six great religions. It is hoped that this book may nourish the spiritual lives of the residents from many lands and be an aid in daily living. The foreword says that the world is a beautiful garden where truth, like flowers, unfolds in different ways. It would be well

[1] M. D. Conway, "Sacred Anthology," 1874; M. K. Schermerhorn, "Sacred Scriptures of the World," 1883; William Norman Guthrie, "Leaves of the Greater Bible," 1917; Alfred W. Martin, "Fellowship of the Faiths," 1925; "Selections from the Six Great Religions," 1926.

to appraise the profit that can come from the use of such books in private or public worship.

Briefer quotations are being used in programs and pamphlets. At the bottom of an announcement of the International Conference on Pan-Pacific Relations (Chicago, 1927) appeared the following:

He is my beloved who is free from intolerance, who is impartial, patient, just.—Hindu.

The root of religion is to reverence one's own faith and never revile that of others.—Buddhist.

Whatever be thy religion, associate with men who think differently from thee. . . . If thou canst mix with them freely and art not angered at hearing them, thou hast attained peace and art a master of creation.—Moslem.

And they shall come from the east and west; and from the north and south, and shall sit down in the Kingdom of God.—Christian.

The Church Peace Union, in a pamphlet attempting to mobilize the religious life and impulse of all nations and peoples in a concerted action for good-will, universal brotherhood, and the abolition of war, placed at the bottom of successive pages the following quotations:

Let one cultivate good-will towards all the world,—a mind illimitable, unobstructed, without hatred, without enmity. This mode of living is the supreme good.—Sutta-Nipata 150-151 (Buddhism).

Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called children of God.—Matthew 5:9 (Christian).

Within the four seas all are brothers.—Analects of Confucius 12.5.4.

To you I declare this holy mystery: There is nothing nobler than humanity.—Mahabharata 12.300.20 (Hinduism).

To God belong the East and the West. Therefore whithersoever ye turn, is the face of God. Verily, God is all-pervading, all-knowing.—Koran 2.109 (Islam).

Establish the religion of the law which benefits all living beings in the whole universe! It will bring supreme benefit to all living beings in all the world!—Kalpa Sutra III (Jainism).

And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.—Isaiah 2.4 (Judaism).

I will halt here today; and, having purified myself, will go forth tomorrow; and worship at the temple of the Deity.—Kojiki 133 (Shinto).

Weapons, even though successful, are unblessed implements, detestable to every creature. Therefore, he who has the Eternal, will not employ them.—Tao-Teh-King 31.1 (Taoism).

Churches, teachers, teaching half a dozen! The Teacher of teachers is One; his forms, many. The sun is one; the seasons many. Innumerable are the manifestations of the Creator.—Adi Granth Sohila 2, 1-2 (Sikhism).

May we ourselves be they who help to make this world progress!—Yasna 30.9 (Zoroastrianism).

In some cases words of non-Christians have been borrowed for a more permanent place in Christian worship. Rabindranath Tagore has found a place not only in a Christian hymn-book but also in a manual of prayer called "Acts of Devotion," which has a wide vogue among Anglicans, and which contains two prayers taken almost verbatim from "Gitanjali." That this is not merely a modern development is evidenced by the phrase, "Lord have mercy upon us," which was borrowed from non-Christian liturgies. Still another kind of use of non-

Christian scriptures is exemplified in one of the most beautiful churches in China. On the wall at the back of the chancel is a large golden cross. On its right is a quotation from the Chinese Classics—"The great Ruler of the Universe eternally shows forth His being and truth." And on the left is another—"The Just One has spread . . . His love and righteousness and perfectly shown forth His salvation."

Such tendencies have been troubling and confusing to some Christians. We are quite ready to say that God has given us some of his most exquisite self-revelations through the prophets of Israel; but when we find truth and beauty in the sacred books of the East, our first instinctive reaction is apt to be jealousy for our Bible. The question inevitably rises, where shall we stop? Where will these innovations lead us?

II

There is the question not only about the use to be made of various sacred scriptures, but also about the place in our thought to be given the religions themselves and their more outstanding prophets. On the library building of an evangelical theological seminary on the Pacific coast are to be found various symbols: the Tao ideogram; the Lotus of Buddhism; the swastika; the Sun of Shinto; various Hebrew symbols, such as the seven-branched candlestick; and various Christian symbols, such as the Nestorian cross representing the earliest missions to Asia, the Shell representing pilgrimages, and others. The general meaning is said to be that all religions are expressions of Religion, that there is a solidarity in man's experience, and yet that Christianity is the crown of man's effort and of God's dealing with

him. These symbols mean that there are all kinds of values in other religions which Christianity can and will take and use, selecting from each new environment as it did from the ancient world both of Greece and of Rome.

A definite recognition of the prophets of other faiths was suggested in a sermon printed some years ago describing the symbolism of the largest Christian church in Honolulu. The pastor pictured the use to which he would like to put four plain panels in the auditorium. He realized that it might be perilous to carry out his idea, but he shared with the congregation the pictures painted by his imagination. On the one would be the Buddha meditating beneath the sacred Bo-tree, representing mystic contemplation. On another, with a background of the beautiful roofs of a Chinese city, would be Confucius writing down the wisdom of China, symbolizing the ethical side of religion—finding God in social relations. On another, against a background of the desert with stars in the night sky, would be Mohammed conveying the thought of the austere God of open spaces. On the fourth would be Moses represented as standing before Pharaoh pleading for social justice. The whole would remind us that we have kinship with all seekers after God. If you were a member of the church committee and if the actual painting of such panels were proposed, how would you vote, and—what is more important—on what grounds?

If you were to ask a succession of members of this church how the suggestion appealed to them, you would doubtless get a variety of answers. One would be manifestly shocked at the idea. Another, moved mainly by a thin and unthinking liberalism, would assent to the suggestion as a matter of course, with no serious philosophy

of religion behind his answer. Another sees that the panels could symbolize respect for all seekers after truth, but knows that very few in the congregation have any realization of the spiritual issues that engaged the thought of Buddha, of Mohammed, or of Confucius. In his opinion very few have the spiritual vision to picture a prophet living twenty-four hundred years ago under a social situation entirely different from our own. This member, therefore, would agree to having the panels painted, providing the pastor would preach a series of educational sermons on these founders of religions.

Still another sees the hazards involved in such a plan of decoration. He fears that the prejudice it may stir up may be greater than the narrowness it may allay. Experience has taught him that precipitous innovation may do more harm than good. Perhaps, therefore, Moses should be compared with Savonarola, and Savonarola with Mohammed, thus lessening the shock of putting the suggested four side by side. Furthermore, this fourth member opposes the suggestion on the merits of the question. He is quite willing for such comparative studies to be carried on in the college classroom, or in some church study class, but when it comes to invading a place set apart for Christian worship he does not want a pedagogical or intellectually discordant note thrown in. These answers still leave one with the question as to how and on what grounds the ideal congregation should decide.

III

The answer to these questions will depend in part on one's theory of inspiration. But man has not found it easy to agree on a theory of how sacred books came to possess the degree of revelation that they manifest.

When a Moses or a Buddha, an Elijah or a Zoroaster, a Jeremiah or a Lao-tze, comes into human history we can say little more than that he came from the fathomless Reality from whom and to whom and through whom are all things.

It is these prophets, rather than books, that have been inspired. They lived in times of social pressure. Their perceptions of higher values were quickened and their insights have been passed on to others. In the face of human need the sensitiveness of these prophetic persons has been enhanced, elevated, intensified, so that they not only experienced but also expressed religious insight. This is what we mean by inspiration.

Some theories of what it means for God to speak to men go much further than this. For some, inspiration means an audible voice, or a divine dictation to a passive recipient giving a verbally infallible, inerrant record, accurate in history, in science, and in religion. With such a theory one could open at any page and be perfectly sure that one had a message from God. Proof texts could be taken indiscriminately from any part. It was easy to think in these terms when men thought of God as wholly transcendent and removed from the scene of his creation.

Others recognize that the divine message is delivered through human personalities in such a way that, while there may be error in the statement of historical and scientific facts, yet there are trustworthy insights into the character and will of God. With the more modern emphasis on God's immanence as well as transcendence, it was almost inevitable that his self-manifestation should be thought of as more continuous and universal. The particular spirit which spake in the prophets is the Spirit of God ever striving to guide men into all truth.

With this latter view we can, with Justin, claim that all things that have been rightly said by all teachers are ours as Christians. We may rightfully appropriate truth found in whatever clime, and hence may widen the original range of the admonition, "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things" (Phil. 4:8).

IV

In the very forefront of our thought on this question is the conviction that a God at all like the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ would inevitably seek to make himself known to all human folk. When we say that God is love, part of the meaning is that God takes the initiative in self-communication. With Paul we believe that God hath not left himself without witness, and that the illumination of the Spirit is without respect of persons. With the prologue of John we believe that the Word has been shining into the darkness, lighting every man coming into the world. We believe that God at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers, not only of Israel but of many peoples by their prophets.

Before Jesus came not only David and Isaiah, but good men in every land in their measure heard God speak. Just because our belief in the revealing activity of the Spirit is a living faith we are ready to see developments of truth wherever that Spirit has been allowed to work. The history of India, China and Japan does not differ from that of Israel, in that God was active

in Israel and inactive in the Orient. It lies partly in the fact that there were men in Palestine who were able to interpret history as an interest of an ethical God, and to write in such a way that we turn to them still for inspiration. Taking as our God the Father of Jesus Christ, it is impossible for us to hold any other view than that this Father has been hovering over his children in every land eager to share his life of truth and grace.

From this standpoint we would be disappointed if we did not find traces of God's presence in every land. As Christians we rejoice that revelation is not exhausted in the Bible. For it would be unsettling to one's faith in the kind of God revealed by Jesus if we did not find many people in many lands through many ages expressing confidence that God has made himself known to man. It immensely strengthens our confidence that God has spoken to us through our prophets when we find testimony to the fact of inspiration coming from every part of our globe. It is just this widespread sense of revelation that confirms our confidence in God's self-communicating love. For if only in Israel prophets were found, we might well question such an isolated fact. But history shows us that down through the ages men in every clime have had an awareness of the meaning and purpose of things that they dared not interpret as other than the message of God.

V

One looks out eagerly over the world, therefore, to see whether men believe that they have heard the voice of God. We find that long before the Bible took shape there was an almost universal belief among peoples that God is not silent, uncommunicative, non-revealing; but that there is such a thing as inspiration—God's breath-

ing into human beings. India says that God has spoken to her through the four Vedas, the Brahmanas, the Upanishads, the laws of Manu, and the Bhagavad Gita of Hinduism; the Siddhantas of Jainism; and the Granth of the Sikhs.

China and Japan join with India in finding revelation in the Tripitaka of Buddhism. China has revered her five "Classics" and four "Books" of Confucianism, though no supernatural authority is claimed for them and for the Tao-Teh-King of Taoism. Japan holds sacred the Ko-ji-ki and the Nihon-gi of Shinto, while Persia feels that God spake through Zoroaster and others in the Avesta. Through numerous minor seers and prophets men believe that God has breathed. In Brahmanism, Judaism, and Islam claims of inspiration exceed those in Christianity. In other words, the noblest leaders of our race—men who in moral earnestness, strength of character, and elevation of motive tower above the ordinary level—witness to the experience of being moved by God. The testimony comes from what is deepest, noblest, and most universal in human nature.

We ungrudgingly and gratefully acknowledge these evidences of a Light manifested to men coming into the world, for it enlarges one's range of spiritual fellowship and gives one a deepened conception of the brooding of God's Spirit over the soul of man. We are glad to recognize with Justin, Clement, and Origen the fact of Divine revelation outside Judaism and Christianity. Just as the best in Judaism was the result of the searchings of their noblest souls after God under the stimulus of great social crises, so the best in the ethnic faiths has been the result of their noblest souls seeking after God in response to his loving quest of them. When a Chinese says "use Confucius books and use Jesus books too,"

we do not necessarily confirm the admonition given in answer by a Western Christian that the Chinese should "use only Jesus books." We certainly would not join that Ceylonese pastor in regret that the Tamil poets had written as well as they had. But we rejoice for what of wisdom, truth, and spirituality can be found in books of the non-Christian faiths. We are thankful that in their worthier portions God has been educating people for himself, and that in them people may listen for his voice. To the familiar thought that God has worked through the Hebrews, Greeks, and Romans, we add the conviction that he has spoken through China, Japan and India, also. For his inspiration has not been confined to any age or race. His revelation is larger than any book or set of books.

It was this ungrudging and grateful spirit that Moses displayed when someone told him that there were some besides himself who prophesied. "Enviest thou for my sake?" he asked. "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets." That surely is the spirit, as Canon Streeter declares,[1] in which Christ would have us approach other religious teachers of mankind.

The position taken here, however, does not mean that all sacred scriptures are on the same level of value. They vary in the nature, degree, and limits of their inspiration. We recognize that God has been able to speak more fully and freely through some men than through others. The Talmud admitted degrees of inspiration in the Old Testament. And we do not hesitate to say that all Psalms do not find us as do the twenty-third or the ninety-first. We turn to the prophets because we find God in their ethical faith, and to the

[1] B. H. Streeter, "Reality," pp. 47, 48.

Gospels because there in Jesus we find the height of revelation.

There is even more unevenness of authority and development in the wider range of sacred books. Hinduism has its glorious heights of spiritual altitude and also its nauseous depths. Seers and prophets have spoken in such measure and manner as each was able to apprehend and set forth the truth. What God could do through them depended upon their moral insight and spiritual discernment in combination with his illumination. Receptivity and responsiveness were not the same in all. Hence throughout the sacred scriptures of the world there are differences in the degree to which God has reached his children. The important result of this is a difference in moral values for mankind.

There is no rule of thumb by which we can tell what is the more final and what the partial; what is the pure gold of moral and religious truth and what the dross. Anyone who ventures into the wider range of sacred books, wishing there to hear God's voice, cannot avoid the discipline of attempting to detect the witness of the Holy Spirit in his heart as to what is of God. Even in the prophetic period of the Old Testament there was no patent way of detecting the true prophet from the false. History and the moral sense had to vindicate the one and disprove the other. We are cautioned not to believe every spirit, but to "try the spirits whether they are of God" (I John 4:1). Inspiration is that which finds you now, and which continues thus to act.

VI

In attempting to find further guidance amid the practical issues raised in the first two sections of this chapter various cautions should be considered. There is, for

example, a very real danger of superficiality in using selected quotations from sacred scriptures. At a service of united worship in India a Brahman read Isaiah 6:1-8 and later a Christian social worker read from the Bhagavad Gita. Such use of scriptures gave one observer the uneasy feeling that the desire to be fair to all religions was leading many to use scriptures about which they had a most superficial knowledge, and was tending to well-intentioned but insincere worship. In general, let no passage be brought into common use except on its merits as best ministering on that occasion to the deepening of spiritual life.

Any widespread and unprepared use of other scriptures would be unwise, for to many it would be disquieting and confusing. Few would want jarring notes brought into their ritual. Probably most people are psychologically so habituated that if they are to grow in their spiritual lives they must hold to one system.

Overabsorption in exploring the values in non-Christian religions may easily take attention from greater values in one's own religion. We should, as a matter of course, possess a spirit of glad appreciation of all truth disclosed in other faiths. But for the disclosure of this truth most of us have neither the time nor the equipment, nor does my study thus far lead me to feel that these faiths have fresh and valid insights of such importance that any Christian needs anxiously to seek them out. When we find a devout Buddhist responding in every breath to the doctrine of the unity of all life, we may be led to see that there are elements in Christianity which we do not at present clearly understand nor emphasize. But the real danger is not that Christians may miss some valuable passage from other sacred books, but that they may utterly fail to grasp what is

essential and real in their own religion, and hence may have little in the way of experience or message to share when opportunity offers. However, thoughtful leaders both among those who send and those who go are unwilling to persist in offering to others the sacred books of Christianity while deliberately remaining ignorant of their sacred scriptures.

Furthermore, as a Buddhist proverb says, "words have souls." These gems culled from other scriptures have an entirely different background of thought from ours. Many of their words have a subtle and delicate and often important meaning which differs from the content of Christian ideas. *Theos* has a certain halo of its own. It takes careful study to appreciate the shade of meaning in *numen*. When we know that scholars spend their lives learning the meaning of Greek and Latin words we should realize that when a composite liturgy is used most people do little more than fill the English translations from Sanskrit and Pali with content from their own religious heritage.

Each religion, also, seems to have an inner consistency of its own, not of the intellect only, but also of taste and feeling, so that to associate religious literatures too closely gives one somewhat the same shock he might receive, say, in hearing a beautiful Indian song accompanied by a Western organ. In order that the non-Christian passages may coalesce, they must be used with very considerate discrimination and judgment. Any serious student, therefore, who attaches weight to every phrase in which he clothes his thought must weigh his action before encouraging any widespread use of such quotations. One Indian leader who is working on a selection of devotional readings from Hindu literature, and who is enlisting Indian Christians in different parts

of the country to help him, realizes that his plan means sacrifice of exactness of thought and content, but feels that some such method is needed to develop a vital and growing religious consciousness which is at once in harmony with the truest and best both in Christianity and in Indian thought.

Some scholars, who know the context of many of the selections that are used, question the wisdom of wresting these passages from their setting. If noteworthy sayings are selected from a mass of morally inferior or petty material, and presented as if they were typical, is this literary honesty? Helpful passages may occur in the midst of much with which we do not agree. There may be myths and legends grotesque and even puerile but of which some stanzas may be of great beauty. To take them out of their setting gives to the uninformed a wrong impression.

All who are tempted to such short-cut methods may well recall what Seneca wrote to his friend: "Wherefore think not, Lucilius, that you can taste summarily, and by scraps, the writings of our greatest men: the whole must be read and thoroughly digested. It is one finished piece, and by the due proportion of the whole, according to the plan of the projector, the work is so connected that you cannot spare a part, without detriment: not that I dispute your considering the several parts one after another, so that you take in the whole man." [1]

Furthermore, one who has not read the various sacred scriptures at first hand is almost sure to get from carefully selected quotations an exaggerated conception of the values in these scriptures. They do not often hear the compilers say that they have had to hunt, sort, sift,

[1] The Epistles of Seneca, 33 (Thomas Morrell, translator).

rake, and in the end acknowledge that what they have put together is exceptional and not typical. These are the gems from thousands of pages. For example, take the much quoted prayer from Hinduism—"From the unreal lead me to the Real! From darkness lead me to Light! From death lead me to Immortality!" It would be well for anyone interested to read over the hundred pages of the Upanishad in which this prayer is found.[1] You will find a beautiful page-long dialogue, and several other quotable bits, but the impression made on most is that of flowers mid arid space. The best and most beautiful passages of the Bhagavad Gita come from a context saturated with transmigration and the law of Karma.

This by no means argues that the selection should not be made. But it does mean that for the sake of proper perspective some sort of popular education should acquaint people with the facts. It is most commendable to seek out and dwell upon the best—but it is also right to realize that it is the best.

VII

What use, then, can be wisely made of these anthologies? The most manifest need for some composite ritual arises in ecumenical, international, or interreligious gatherings. At such meetings there would seem to be a place not only for dramatizing the underlying unity of mankind, but for furthering that temper and spirit in which the solution of large problems becomes possible. Antagonisms can be broken down and bonds of union

[1] R. E. Hume, "The Thirteen Principal Upanishads," pp. 73-176.

created. There is the added advantage that those who attend such gatherings are very likely more prepared by education, travel, and experience to profit by such appreciative use of other scriptures than their own.

It was to help on with a great problem that Mahatma Gandhi called for various scriptures at one of the greatest crises of his life. It will be remembered that in 1924 he entered upon a twenty-one day fast. It was the kind of fast which Jesus would have approved, for it was a genuine expression of his sorrow and humiliation over the violence and bloodshed that had attended certain riots between Hindus and Moslems. At noon on the twenty-first day he was about to end his fast. A group of friends was gathered about the couch on which he lay. He first asked a lifelong Moslem friend from South Africa to recite a prayer from the Koran. Then he asked a Christian to sing "When I survey the wondrous cross," after which he asked a Hindu to recite some passages from the Upanishads, and another to sing a favorite hymn describing the ideal Vaishnava. Thus he tried to bind together India's two great factions.

In the second place, many Christian nationals in lands which have sacred scriptures of their own feel a real need for using suitable selections from their older religious heritage along with quotations from the Christian scriptures. As at Helsingfors, a national can draw on his country's religious heritage with a degree of naturalness that may not be necessary or appropriate in us. One of the Chinese Christians best known in the West makes it a practice to use quotations from the Classics in conducting devotional exercises—in China, because he believes that Christianity in that country must build on the truth in these writings; in America, in order to show that China is not bereft of noble thoughts and teachings.

Not all nationals feel this need of using the highest in their old religious culture. There are many who have left Buddhism or Islam and who wish to drop all association with the past. These would join Tertullian in saying, "We who have renounced Satan have escaped his tyranny; but if we tamper with the accursed thing, we shall fall into his hands again." One Moslem convert remarked that when he came across a few *suras* from the Koran all the deep subconscious pull toward the old life and the family which he had left became active and he had at such times to pull himself together boldly, asserting that in Christianity he had something better. Convalescent patients, however, should not determine normal diet.

Western Christians in the Orient are divided on their attitude to the scriptures of other faiths. On the one hand, in a certain questionnaire asking among other things whether the Chinese Classics should be put on the same basis as the Old Testament, the negative votes outnumbered the affirmative seven to one. One of the older yet most valued missionaries to China wrote in 1901[1] that he had noticed that quotations from the Chinese Classics are most freely made by the least scholarly and thoughtful preachers, and that, on the whole, he is inclined to believe that a sermon in which Confucius is quoted is a sermon spoiled. He thinks that the effect of such quotations on the average Chinese hearer is, not that Confucius supports Christian teaching, but that Christian teaching is drawn from Confucius and that the preacher is simply enforcing the teaching of Confucian books.

[1] J. Campbell Gibson, "Missionary Problems and Mission Methods in South China," p. 165.

And yet, on the other hand, there are great numbers of missionaries who definitely hunt for those parts of the sacred scriptures of the people to whom they have gone which may be usable—as it were, an Old Testament for that people—the "first Old Testament" as the Indian Christian poet, Tilak, used to say. In the report of the third annual meeting of the National Christian Council of China we are told[1] that one Chinese leader asked: "Why cannot the Christian Church in China recognize Confucius and Mencius as prophets as well as Moses, Isaiah and Jeremiah?" Many there are who are laying aside passages about which they have become ashamed; and into the best of their heritage they are reading the spirit of Christ. They see Christians reading the sacred book of the Hebrews in the light of Christ and ask why Hindus and Buddhists should not so read their scriptures.

This is, after all, a matter which the nationals will decide. Some creative artist will undoubtedly attempt to discover in what ways, if at all, the indigenous scriptures of his land can be used to heighten their devotion to Christ and not to lower it. If after experiment and long trial they feel like putting the Analects up on their pulpits with the Bible, who shall say nay? But if after the test of experience they never feel like raising it to that place, or if after some spurt of nationalism is over they find it little used, let them give it a lesser place. Not whether two books rest on the pulpit but whether one Person reigns in the heart is the vital question!

In the third place, there is a decided gain in bringing the very highest from a non-Christian religion's sacred scriptures before its own adherents. Often these scrip-

[1] China Press, May 16, 1925.

tures are not available to the common people. They do not know their own gems, hidden in a voluminous literature and often in a language unknown to the people. A certain missionary to Japan made it a rule of his village preaching always to read the first day from the Buddhist scriptures in order to show that they had not yet lived up to their own best. We might attempt to draft responsive readings for non-Christians; but in doing so we should remember that the device of "responsive readings" is largely a Western and a Christian practice, and is not part of the popular ritual in most religions. In using the exceptional we may easily give even the adherents of other faiths a wrong conception of their own scriptures. But, notwithstanding this possibility, surely it is good to hold up the best and lead men to the highest. In our appreciation of the best we can doubtless do something toward calling forth the best, as did Paul at Athens (Acts 17:28). If in the scriptures of India we find conflicting opinions on the value placed on womanhood we may be able to help by overlooking the less valuable passages and making positive use of the more elevating ones.

And what of Christian people in the West? Would not an occasional or periodic use of the best from other faiths serve to reinforce the truth that a creative Spirit dwells in the hearts of all mankind? And in these days of world shrinkage is not this truth one that needs to be emphasized more urgently than in the past? The average man tends to ignore, or at least to grudge and to minimize, the degree and kind of truth and goodness in other peoples. From this standpoint it may be desirable from time to time to recall the fact that God has spoken to other peoples, to renew our sense of spiritual comradeship with other earnest searchers after God, and

to ponder on the way in which the Spirit has brooded over every part of mankind. The future edition of some hymnal may have at the end of its responsive readings a selection of passages from the non-Christian sacred scriptures.

VIII

In considering this whole question of the various sacred scriptures, there is one historical fact that stands out, viz., Jesus Christ. The "divine word" to Christians is not primarily a literature but a person. The content and character of this living word is discovered in the spirit and temper of Christ. Regarding this momentous fact the most ancient and most authoritative documents we possess are in the Bible. This is its greatest value, and makes the Gospels more indispensable than any other sacred writing.

Furthermore, the impress of that Life was such that the immediate generations following were as a community made spiritually sensitive above the ordinary. Out from this corporate life—life manifestly spiritually empowered—came other records now bound up with the Gospels. We renew our faith and vision in their deep spiritual insights. Throughout the Bible we are presented with great moral realities embodied in great personalities so that anyone with a sense for ethical religion feels their cumulative value. These considerations form a second reason why the Bible for the Christian stands out among sacred books.

Therefore, let us not lose our sense of proportion as we read the prayers and passages in some compilation of sacred scriptures. The good news for the world contained in Christianity is not primarily its unique, or

even at all points its superior, ethical teachings and aspirations. It is connected with the fact that no other religion has the Christ. Let us get over our surprise at finding in other sacred scriptures good thoughts well expressed with novel, and therefore stimulating, metaphors. These do not make a gospel. Fill a score of volumes with sententious sayings, with moral truths, with the heart's longing after God, from all the scriptures of the world. These warm aspirations or abstract philosophies do not give a living, vital, inspiring Personality through contact with whom our bents, our impulses, and our whole beings are influenced and molded. From the standpoint of eternal life it makes relatively little difference whether we have a few more or a few less of these quotations. It does matter supremely whether we have learned to appreciate and abide in the personality of Jesus Christ.

Some fear that the increased use of various sacred scriptures by Christians will blur the sense of uniqueness in the Bible. But what does supremely matter is whether Christ gets blurred. If sipping from this text and that, if passing freely from the Analects to the Gita, and from the Gita to the Gospels, the sharpness of his figure becomes blurred, then indeed will the world be the loser from this eclecticism. The danger in an anthology lies not in that some may find that the Bible is not the sole means of nourishing the religious life, but that in the maze one may lose sight of Jesus Christ. Warning on this point cannot be too emphatic. For those who have experienced him, anthologies from sacred scriptures take their proper place in one's scale of values.

CHAPTER III

INTERCONFESSIONAL COURTESIES AND HOSPITALITY

I

An unusual problem came to one of the leading pastors of a city in western New York. A sheikh approached him asking for the use of his parish house for the purpose of organizing a mosque, as he had found difficulty in finding a suitable place near the Moslem community in that city. The pastor consulted his two colleagues and then gave permission. The sheikh held the meeting, organized the mosque, and afterwards contributed fifty dollars to the work of the church.

Such an action on the part of this pastor raises various responses depending on the training and outlook of the person hearing of it. One member of the congregation came in indignation asking how the pastor could reconcile the fact that the church was sending money to Arabia to convert the Moslems with extending help to start a mosque in their own city. Perhaps this question indicates that the pastor should have consulted the congregation as well as his two colleagues, using this occasion as a concrete opportunity in education as they wrestled together with the question.

Another person, a layman, when asked what he would have done in such a situation said that he knew very little about Islam, and what he did know was mainly

negative. He thought it would be well for people to see Islam at its best and at first hand. He, therefore, would let Islam show itself, and reveal such truth as it might have.

A missionary from Turkey said that, if he were in the pastor's place, he would help the sheikh if only the sheikh would bring a bit of Turkey with him and let the people see Islam as it really is! What he feared was that this Western mosque would not give a true impression of Islam.

A specialist to Moslems in India thought the sheikh must have reasoned that the people of the church were interested in religion; he too was interested in religion; surely they would help him. With only 10,000 Moslems in the whole of the United States this specialist saw no possible danger of Americans becoming Moslems. This mosque would be surrounded by Christians. Surely it would be a demonstration of the lack of dynamic in Christianity if the new mosque had any great effect. As it is now, we are separated from Moslems by a great gulf. If we are ever to help them we must get together. The Moslems were there in the city without religious ministrations. They meant to organize somewhere. To help them would make them kindly disposed. So he looked at the request as a chance to do a favor, and to make a contact that could be followed up.

Another missionary to Moslems said that he would avoid letting them use the church property for the organization of the mosque. He would, however, in the interests of free speech go with the sheikh and help him get some public place of meeting.

Still another said he would refuse the request on principle; but would seek to show to the limit in other ways that he loved the sheikh and was ready to serve him in

any non-religious way. According to his view, all the good results of granting the sheikh's request could be obtained by aggressive service in other ways without compromising church property.

It does not seem so strange to permit Jews to use our churches. For, in America, the opportunity for spiritual hospitality across the boundaries of religion comes most frequently in connection with the Jews. For example, the Second Congregational Church of Holyoke, Mass., invited the Jewish people of the city through their proper associations to be present at a large public service at which a Jewish leader spoke. They also offered the use of the assembly hall of their parish house for lectures or social gatherings which the Jewish people could not have in their own small quarters. In doing this they have had two thoughts in mind. First, they are trying in every way to build up a community feeling between the various social and religious groups in the city. A public meeting of this kind makes the fraternal spirit evident in actual performance, which is far more effective than any mere preaching about such a spirit. Secondly, they hope to inform their own people and the Jewish people about the elements of religion that are underlying the lives of all, in an attempt to show that the division between Jews and Christians need not be as deep as it has been. No effort is made to proselytize.

We evidently feel differently about what was done for the Moslems in that city in western New York and what was done for the Jews in Holyoke. And yet Islam, also, is a Semitic, non-idolatrous, monotheistic faith. It, also, inculcates belief in one supreme deity, who is a sovereign world-ruler, who is merciful and compassionate, and to whose will utter devotion is due. If we believe that the hospitality extended to the Jews was in accord with

the spirit of our Master, is it prejudice or judgment based on the science of religion that accounts for the different feeling toward Moslems?

II

There are abundant instances where hospitality has been extended in the other direction, i. e., from non-Christians to Christians. In a village where there was no shade tree in front of any Christian's home, a visiting missionary was invited by a wealthy Moslem to bring the Christians and to hold a meeting in his dooryard.[1] Thinking that the Moslem might not understand just what was involved in a Christian service and that he might object especially to the prayers, the missionary hesitated at first about accepting the invitation. He explained as tactfully as he could that they wished to hold a full Christian service for the benefit of these believers, and that the host, as a good Moslem, might feel that he had to take exception to some of the things that would be said. The man assured the missionary, however, that he was ready not only to listen, but also to take part as far as possible in the service. So the Christians accepted his invitation and soon were seated under a large tree in his courtyard with an audience of about fifty Moslem men seated around them. The missionary said that he had never had a more respectful audience, even among Christians, and the Moslem host himself set the example by bowing his head as the Christians did when they prayed. He also accepted a Bible from the missionary very gratefully and invited

[1] Cf. "Woman's Missionary Friend," March, 1927.

the missionary to hold services in his house on each visit to that village.

In considering this incident we have to remember that the Moslem host may have been a hidden seeker. Or it may have been no more than Oriental hospitality without any necessary implication of religious open-mindedness. Many times Moslems do not know how different Christianity is from Islam. They know that we are "people of the book" and they accept Jesus as a prophet. In this spirit often a religious leader will buy a gospel and, after he has read it, come back to curse you. Or a Moslem may let you have a preaching camp in his garden, and then after a few days send you away saying he thought you were going to do medical work. Sometimes, however, they give the use of their garden, introduce their friends, and say, "We Moslems don't believe as you do, but we are willing to hear." Or the shade tree may have been lent on the principle of *noblesse oblige*—he may have been so sure of his own faith that he could afford to be indulgent.

In Egypt Christian services are frequently held in the house of the Moslem mayor of the village being visited. His visitors' hall serves as a general assembly room on state occasions. He has a high sense of hospitality, and his home serves as the village hotel for guests who do not have special friends to entertain them. When a missionary, as an educated foreigner, comes to his village the mayor ordinarily shows respect and courtesy. It is difficult to appraise the exact degrees in which his courtesy reflects such varied factors as his innate hospitality, his curiosity, his religious broad-mindedness, or his care for his reputation with the higher officials with whom the missionary may have influence. It is easy for blunt, plain-speaking, frank Westerners to take more

than is meant from such Oriental expressions of hospitality.

Whatever the motivation in the particular case of hospitality under the shade tree, it is by no means uncommon for non-Christians to make Christian worship possible by providing a place for it. In China and Japan Buddhist and Confucian temples are frequently used for Christian preaching, retreats, or conferences. It should be remembered in judging the significance of such hospitality that in China and Korea monasteries are often used as much for pleasure as for worship. Anyone wishing for rest and change may arrange to stay at them. Also, it is usually some accessory building and not the central sacred shrine that is opened up for Christian use—granting the use of a monastery would be more like lending the dormitories and other buildings of a theological seminary or Bible training school.

We shall catch something of the possible quality of Oriental hospitality by means of a few examples. A Buddhist temple near Karuizawa, where many missionaries spend the summer, is leased by the Y. M. C. A. each year for a few days to hold a retreat for Christians, and also for "Y" teachers in Japanese Government schools. This large old temple is ordinarily used as a sort of training school for young priests during the year. The site, being full of shrines and cryptomeria trees, as well as being right in the midst of the mountain peaks of that section, is well known as a Buddhist center. About fifty Christians eat and sleep in the temple for three or four days during this conference, and have a set program of prayer and general discussion of problems with some special speaker. The priests simply throw open the place to those in charge, giving the conference general use of the building.

A half dozen men in an evangelistic band reached a market town in China to find the only inn a very uncomfortable place. The next day the head of the Buddhist temple invited them to be his guests during their stay. He and the other priests attended the meetings and at the close of the week united with the village elders in giving a feast for the Christian band.

In one of the most beautiful Buddhist temples in South China a Christian meeting was held. The abbot of the monastery not only allowed the Christians to meet in the best room of the temple, but during much of the session sat with them listening as they studied the Bible, prayed, and planned for further work.

In Chengtu a Chinese secretary of the National Christian Council held a retreat to which were invited a small group of evangelistic workers, both Chinese and foreign. One of the pastors, through a friend who was a Taoist priest, secured the temple just outside the city for the meeting. The surroundings were ideal for their purposes. The priests received them with the utmost cordiality, and all felt that the friendly intercourse between Taoist and Christian during those days did much to promote mutual understanding.

Instances of religious hospitality may be found in India. The Raja of Mainiabad, a modern, liberal, Western-educated Moslem, loaned to the Christian community of Lucknow his big tent seating four hundred or more. In Brindaban, the playground of India's popular god Krishna, there is no Christian church suitably located for reaching the Hindu pilgrims; through the influence of a missionary one of the Hindu temples was offered for Christian use. The inhabitants of a town in West India used to be most bitter opponents of Christianity. As the result of friendships made through mission

hospital and school better relations have been established. Recently a Christian meeting was about to be held near the school when the leading Hindus, including the priest, came and invited all (even the Christians of low-caste origin) to the temple court for the service. A Hindu who was an expert drum player gave his services for the meeting. One of the leading evangelists of India reports meetings "even in Hindu temple compounds." [1]

In Oakland, Calif., occurred a striking instance of fraternity between Jews and Christians. Owing to the growth of the city, the First Congregational Church had to sell the old church property and find a place for worship in the meantime. Hearing of this, the president of the Temple Sinai gave this congregation a cordial invitation to occupy the Jewish house of worship on Sunday as long as they desired. He made it very clear that under no circumstances could they purchase the right to worship there; they could only have it as a free and glad gift. The First Congregational Church occupied that beautiful and commodious Temple for all its services for two years. During those years union services were held either on Friday night or Sunday morning, and every week brought growth in mutual respect and understanding between these peoples. In commemoration of this fellowship identical bronze tablets were put up in temple and in church so that they are the first things to strike the eye on entering. A matron in the traditional garb of the ancient Hebrew looks into the face of a young woman dressed in modern academic gown and with her hand upon the young woman's shoulder is guiding her into the Temple where

[1] E. Stanley Jones, "The Christ of the Indian Road," p. 83.

the light that is never allowed to go out is shining from the Hebrew altar. Above are the words of the text, "Behold how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," and beneath are the words, "To commemorate the gracious hospitality extended by Temple Sinai to the First Congregational Church, 1923-1925."

III

Such incidents raise the question as to whether there should be reciprocity in this matter of spiritual hospitality. If we approve of the wealthy Moslem's turning over his shade tree for a Christian service, do we also approve of a Christian pastor in western New York lending his parish house for the organization of a mosque? If missionaries ask for Buddhist accommodations to be given in a loving spirit, should they share their own property in a spirit equally loving? The understanding could be the same on both sides, i. e., care of the property as though it were one's own; and no forfeiture of allegiance to one's own faith. Is the Golden Rule applicable here? Or is the nature and preeminence of our religion such that we are justified in receiving all sorts of favors from non-Christians which we strictly refuse to reciprocate? The varied ramifications of these questions may be seen through concrete instances.

Contributions for the church building in a Chinese city had been solicited and received from the gentry of the city largely through the good offices of the city magistrate, on the basis of a program making the church building available for all general meetings in the city "in harmony with the spirit of the Christian Church." The building was a fairly successful attempt to combine

Chinese architecture with Western utility and has been greatly admired by the Chinese of the vicinity. The magistrate himself had proclaimed it "the first building of the city." After the building had been completed a little more than a month the magistrate's secretary called on the church committee and asked for the use of the building for a meeting in honor of a visiting lama. Questions naturally arose. Was such a use of the building in harmony with the original understanding that it should be available for all gatherings in accord with the spirit of the Christian Church? Would it be dishonoring Christ for the pontiff of another religion to sit in state in the auditorium? As a matter of fact, a committee—composed of three Chinese and two foreigners—unanimously agreed to grant permission for this use of the church. The decision was sustained in general by the Christian community, although there was some division of opinion.

A missionary in the United Provinces, India, lent to the orthodox Sunni Moslem religious leaders his large mission tent. They invited him to be present, asked him to speak, and he was free to witness as he wished. Not infrequently school halls are lent to non-Christians for one purpose or another. For example, a Hindu organization asked for a mission school for a Saturday night theatrical performance for some Hindu charity. The school was given on the condition that there should be nothing obscene and that the hall should be cleared before Sunday morning when it would be needed for a Christian service.

IV

In other cases those responsible have felt that the permission of non-Christian worship on mission property

would be unfaithful to their trust. The Moslem students in a mission college for women in India asked for the college hall for a special Moslem commemoration service to which they were going to ask all the teachers. The faculty, including the Indian members, voted down the request on the grounds that the buildings had been dedicated for Christian work and that the hall was the place where the Christian chapel services were wont to be held. The proposed meeting was held, therefore, in one of the girls' rooms; the Christian teachers were not invited; and the Moslem girls stopped attending the voluntary Bible discussion groups.

Again, when the funeral services of a prominent Japanese judge were being held at a Shinto temple, his friends asked the use of a church nearby as an overflow meeting place. No worship was involved, but there would have been talking and smoking unless they had been cautioned. Although the judge had been almost Christian at heart, as was witnessed by the request of his friends for the use of the church, permission was refused.

In a mission college in Ceylon the principal found a group of students in the dormitory studying Hindu saints. They finally acknowledged that they had a Young Men's Hindu Association. He said he would permit it so long as it was under the leadership of good students. But the Ceylonese Christians objected. They said that foreign and Ceylon money had gone into erecting this Christian institution in order that Christians might know their children would not be led astray by Hinduism.

The Chinese Christians at Seoul definitely decided not to ask for funds from non-Christians when they were building their church. They did not want to be obligated to let non-Christians use the building on special occa-

sions. They were ten thousand yen in debt when someone suggested holding a public concert. This plan, also, was vetoed because it seemed to go back on the principle of not receiving funds from non-Christians.

A peculiarly difficult decision must be made when servants wish to have their idols or other worship on mission property. A missionary in Japan, for example, employs a Japanese as cook. The cook lives with his wife, parents, and children in a Japanese building at the rear on mission property—the part known as the "servants' quarters." Being a Buddhist, the cook proposes to follow the customs of his cult by erecting a miniature shrine before which he can pray and burn incense. He also wants to put up a little "god-shelf" in his living room on which he can place certain religious emblems and at which he can burn incense. This would enable him and his family to express their religious nature in the way which they consider true and proper. The shrine, while inconspicuous and quite unobjectionable from any other standpoint than the religious, can yet be seen by the chance passer-by; the idol-shelf can, of course, be seen only by one who enters the servant's house. Both are on the property of a society intent on leading men out of idolatry.

In 1908 when the Moslem and Jewish students struck against compulsory chapel at the American University of Beirut the suggestion was unofficially made by the Moslems that they be permitted to have a mosque on the campus. The request never came before the faculty, but if it had there very likely would have been a difference of opinion. Some would say that if they allowed one non-Christian house of worship, they must allow all; and that on principle as a Christian institution they should provide only a Christian form of service, or at most a

service of universal religion. Others might argue that just because they were Christians they ought to allow the widest latitude in worship in the hope that they might influence the worship of other sects.

V

Any question like this cannot be settled by a universal "yes" or "no"—unless one takes the view that all religions except Christianity are fundamentally bad, that to have no religion is better than to have any religion other than Christianity, and that non-Christian religions perform no useful function for their adherents.

What one does will depend somewhat on the possible effect produced on others. A congregation may not yet be ready for a given step. It may shake the faith of weak Christians. A step that might rightly be taken on principle may be unwise as it affects children and the immature in thought. We must guard the implications of the act. Others may interpret our hospitality to worshipers of another faith as infidelity to or doubt about our own.

One's decision will depend in part on one's whole conception of the part played in worship by environment and association. For one may on principle keep the church auditorium exclusively for worship and attempt to induce a spirit of reverence by means of quiet, architectural atmosphere, and exclusive association. This ideal would manifestly be thwarted by the use of the church for miscellaneous activities and for the worship of strange gods. Any bizarre use of a church would for many seriously detract from its capacity to induce solemnity and reverence; but this objection would not apply to the lending of schools and parish houses. Then

there are those who respect any religion more if it is exclusive in the use of its shrines but ready to cooperate in other ways.

For many areas the problem raised in this chapter is theoretical. In the Orient there are plenty of temples and mosques to which the non-Christians can go so that the need for the return favor in kind from Christians does not exist. Moreover, a Japanese might easily find it impossible to conceive of Buddhists ever asking for the use of a church. The large amount of equipment they use and the nature of their worship would be impracticable in a church. In contrast, a Protestant service is fairly simple and would disarrange a temple or monastery less than their worship would affect our auditoriums.

But emergencies arise—a synagogue burns down or an earthquake destroys a temple. What would you be willing to do under those exceptional circumstances? Christians—especially missionaries abroad—very frequently receive favors from non-Christians in the way of places for preaching, retreats, and worship. Can we continue to receive such favors without being willing to reciprocate? Or, if we cannot reciprocate, should Christians refuse to ask for or accept these privileges from their brothers in another faith?

For present purposes, a consideration of the question raised in this chapter is worth while if it spurs us to form some philosophy of religion—a conception of what these religions are and in what ways they are functioning. If they are indeed evil, then one should have nothing to do with accepting or extending hospitality where they are concerned. But if they are functioning, though inadequately, for their followers, it would seem that there might be justifiable occasions for the interchange of spiritual hospitality.

CHAPTER IV

MATERIAL CONTRIBUTIONS BETWEEN RELIGIONISTS

I

It may seem a trivial thing to a passing traveler whether or not on solicitation he contributes the cost of a tile for a Buddhist temple in Japan; whether or not on finishing the rounds of a temple in Ceylon his parting gift is strictly a tip for service rendered or is as a matter of fact a contribution to the support of non-Christian worship. But the more thoughtful will want to know just why they should give or refrain from giving, and what is the philosophy of religion lying back of these seemingly casual acts.

The occasions for needing some principle in regard to the interchange of gifts for religious purposes between Christians and non-Christians are various. An American evangelist ties up for the night near a village on the banks of the Yangtze River. A priest comes to his boat and solicits a contribution for the repair of the Buddhist temple. A group of Western Christians lease a portion of a temple near Peking for conference purposes. One of them each year attends some of the periods of Buddhist worship, talks with the priests at night and gives them a few dollars—not as a tip, nor as rent, but as a free expression of good-will. A very spiritual pastor in northern Japan gives regularly to the temple in his

town, believing that it is a community affair, and he wants to identify himself with the community. A Japanese lay worker moved into a new neighborhood to start a new center of Christian work. He was soon approached by a Buddhist priest with the request for money for a certain religious festival. The Christian agreed to give a contribution on one condition, that it should not be used for liquor or immoral purposes but only for religious uplift.

Less direct is it when missionaries patch, paint, or repair a temple that has been lent them. Often they have been careful to leave the buildings in better condition than when they entered. In one case this involved rebuilding one of the smaller temples. The charges in these instances were entered as rent in the mission budget.

The contribution need not be in the form of money. A Chinese resident of Hangchow, stimulated by what foreigners had done for his city in building up a college there, thought that he should do something for his country. He decided to rebuild the celebrated temple of Ling Ying which had been destroyed by the Taiping rebels. He asked his friend, Captain Robert Dollar, to bring from America twenty-four of her largest trees as pillars for the temple. Captain Dollar, eager to deepen friendship between China and America, not only brought these great logs in his boats but donated them to the temple. A small bronze tablet on the pillars perpetuates the memory of this gift to worshipers who care to read. Here you have a Christian man becoming the means of strikingly beautifying for a generation or more a non-Christian place of worship. If you were asked to advise a Christian business man as to whether he should assist in a similar gift, what would you say?

The contribution took the form of a flower in an American home in Japan. One day the mistress gave her maid, quite spontaneously, a rose "to take to her Buddha." This greatly touched the maid, who burst into tears at this touch of kindness. Later she came back and, knowing that Christians used no images, asked "What may I give for your Christ?"

Was it a different philosophy of religion or simply lack of imagination or flexibility that caused a lady in India to refuse a request for flowers? She had a lovely garden, which was admired and enjoyed by many of her Indian friends. Among the flowers were some of which Hindus are especially fond since they use them in their worship. To them marigolds are practically sacred, in so much as these and certain leaves are, along with rice and water, the most common offerings to the gods. In informal temple worship people choose as offerings the things they themselves like. They do not think that the god will use them, but that the god is pleased with the gift as a sign of homage and humility. On this day a Hindu friend came requesting of her some of these sacred marigolds. She knew they would be taken to the temple, and felt that she could have no part in this idolatry. She said that if he wanted flowers for his house, for a sick friend, for some purpose of beauty or of love she would gladly give him flowers. But since on principle she did not believe in idolatry she could not give the flowers for idols. She wished that he could find a truer worship. The question arises, whether she would have been justified in giving flowers under these circumstances, and as to what course of action would demonstrate most effectually the spirit of helpfulness and respect for personality.

The cooperation desired may not even involve a gift

of flowers. It may be quite immaterial. A missionary was living with his family one summer in a Chinese temple in the mountains. His desk was in front of several idols especially worshiped by women. One day a poor woman came with a piece of cloth to place on the idol's head. This was in payment of a vow that, if her daughter who had been sick was restored to health, a gift of a piece of red cloth would be made to the goddess for her mercy. The woman could not reach the head of the idol even with the help of her walking stick. There was nothing available on which to stand unless she borrowed some of the missionary's furniture; but she was afraid to do so when there was a foreign man nearby. Should he help her to worship her idol or take the opportunity to tell her the uselessness of her efforts, and advise her to take her cloth home and use it herself rather than waste it on a man-made idol? He knew that the priest in charge of the temple was an opium-smoking and vice-indulging man who would take the cloth at his first opportunity and sell it. What he did was to call his woman servant to bring a pole, and he adjusted the cloth on the idol's head as the worshiper desired. On this occasion the servant understood his motives and interpreted them to the worshiper in the colloquial tongue.

II

Thus far each of the situations given has been taken from real life. Let us face a hypothetical one. Suppose you were a responsible member of your board of foreign missions and that immediately following the devastating Japanese earthquake a statement had been made that thousands of devout Buddhists in this time of crisis and

distress had been deprived of their temples—for them the centers of religious solace. Suppose, also, that along with all the special demands during those hard days on funds for Christian losses, a plea had been made by some member of the board that, as a gesture of friendship to comrades in need, a subscription from funds of the society be given for aiding in the restoration of Buddhist temples. At once it would be asserted that this would be a malappropriation of funds—they were not given to help Buddhism. Suppose the motion were then amended proposing that the society initiate a small special fund for this purpose letting those give who wished.

Arguments would at once begin. On the one hand, it would be said that the suggestion might shock the giving constituency in America. It might confuse the issue for Christians in both America and Japan. It is the duty of the society to keep the primacy of Christianity ever before itself and the world, and it must, therefore, do nothing that would weaken this. Such a gift would be unnatural, artificial; and the Japanese would wonder what was back of it. It would tend to break down the defenses between religions. It would merely indicate that Americans did not know Japanese Buddhism; for at its best, it might be argued, Buddhism leads to philosophic quiet and a temper of mind in which a personal relationship to God is blocked; and at its worst it draws to *saké* and immorality. The Japanese want us not to help Buddhism, but to live out our own standards and our own religion; if these standards are good, they will be adopted; if bad, they will be rejected.

Something could be said on the other side. Most of the temples would be rebuilt anyway. If that were going to be the case, why not show good-will to fellow wayfarers, deprived as they were by a catastrophe of

such comfort as their temples afforded, and not likely to come en masse and at once to the ministry of an alien faith. It would be granted that some temples and some whole sects would be quite unworthy, but that Christians on the spot could use discrimination. The situation is an emergency; and with a long history of evangelism behind it and unmistakable efforts toward this end in the future, the society's position could hardly be misunderstood by an intelligent person. It might, however, divide the constituency and hence the mover admits that, as yet, a society can hardly risk such an innovation. He, nevertheless, wonders what the effect would be in the long years ahead if a society, thoroughly missionary and unhesitatingly committed to the lordship of Jesus Christ, should have extended a helping hand, not as from Americans to Japanese, but as from Christians to Buddhists. Would there be a distinct religious gain or loss in such a gesture, rather than giving all the relief through the Red Cross or Red Swastika Society?

III

In meeting the issue of this chapter several considerations are pertinent. In the first place, it is clear that Christians, whatever they may decide to do voluntarily, should not be *compelled* to contribute to the support of idolatry, of non-Christian worship. In China village taxes are often in part used for the upkeep of temples, the maintenance of official village worship, or for plays given in honor of various gods. Furthermore, most villages keep no separate accounts showing expenditures for religious purposes, so that it is almost impossible to segregate this item. It is an old question whether a missionary society should pay in full such village taxes

levied on land occupied by the mission. The problem has been a fruitful source of local difficulty for the Chinese Christians. They naturally want to bear their share of just taxes, hence many Chinese Christians are paying dues which are used in part for idolatrous worship. They say that, if they do not thus contribute, the people will shut off their water, let pigs overrun their fields, or refuse them the protection of the village constable.

The ethical judgment that Christians should not be compelled to pay fees to idolatrous societies nor taxes for non-Christian worship in villages was embodied in the treaty of the Powers with China in 1900. As a working principle one mission has adopted a rule that where the tax for religious purposes is not levied separately, the Christians are to pay only sixty per cent of the tax levy. This frequently works hardship in the villages, since idolatrous expenditures may not amount to forty per cent, and bitterness on the part of non-Christians is aroused. Another mission has been in the habit of settling each case on its own merits, in most cases with a much smaller discount than forty per cent. One may hope that treaty regulations in behalf of Christianity may be removed without changing one's ethical judgment on the point at issue.

In the second place, it will help us if we reverse the conditions and note how we regard non-Christians who contribute to distinctly Christian work. No one who has ever visited Rome can forget the church of St. Paul outside the walls. The yellow pillars of Oriental alabaster at the entrance, as well as the four at the tabernacle of the high altar, were presented by the Moslem Viceroy of Egypt at the time of the reconstruction of the church after the disastrous fire of 1823. An analysis of

our judgment of the wisdom of this gift, and of its effect upon all who learn of it through the passing decades, ought to help us to appreciate Captain Dollar's gift of pillars to the Ling Ying temple.

The president of the Bombay Tract Society made the initial gift to a new endowment fund for the society. Then he went to a Buddhist friend and asked him to give the second hundred rupees; and to a Parsee friend and asked him to give the third. Both contributed. Assuming that these two men were loyal adherents of their respective religions, did this Tract Society leader do wrong in soliciting funds from them, or did they do wrong in responding?

If a Hindu gives us some roses from his garden for decorating the pulpit on a Sunday morning, we do not immediately draw the conclusion that he is beginning to lose faith in Hinduism. If in a certain Chinese city several wealthy professing Buddhists contribute to the new Christian chapel that is being built, we do not need to assign further significance to their act than the reason given by them—that they want to show respect for the pastor who has commended himself to them through eighteen years of service. If in a certain district of India two Christian workers are about to be dismissed because of a cut in mission appropriations and if they are enabled to continue through solicited gifts from non-Christian villagers, we have a right to conclude that those non-Christians saw value in Christianity, but not necessarily that they valued it more than Hinduism.

Such gifts doubtless unconsciously make the givers more sensitive to Christianity. Such gifts awaken in our imagination the possibility of the givers becoming Christians. Of course, they may be misunderstood. But just as we do not necessarily regard gifts from non-

Christians as evidence of nascent doubt regarding the giver's religion, nor as indicating an unduly lax attitude to other religions, so might occasional gifts from Christians be regarded on their face value as gestures of friendship and good-will. It is not, therefore, certain that such gifts would create a wrong impression of a person's loyalty to Jesus Christ.

On the other hand, the acceptance of gifts from the adherents of other faiths for a distinctly Christian cause seems most unwise to some Christians. Is there danger that we may insensibly yet inevitably become bound to those from whom we accept money? May not such gifts act unconsciously as forms of bribery? Commenting on the fact that a Christian convention in the Orient had allowed certain Buddhists and Confucianists to contribute some thousands of dollars to the expenses, an American religious weekly objected:

"If Paul had been led to hold a Christian convention in the city of Ephesus, after the Church at Ephesus was well established, the convention to be attended by Christians from the entire civilized world of that day, can we think of Paul either seeking or permitting the moral and financial patronage and cooperation of leading worshippers of Diana of the Ephesians, such as Demetrius, the silversmith, of the town clerk who had quelled the riot there, or of other leading non-Christians who could give 'prestige' and publicity to the Christian convention if they would? Or would Paul have felt that the fellowship and co-operation of any who were not openly confessed believers in Christ as the only Son of God and the only Saviour of men would have been a tragic barrier to the giving of the Gospel?"

Those are the very questions which this chapter is intended to raise.

A third consideration has to do with reciprocity. It is a common practice for missionaries to solicit subscriptions from non-Christians for their schools, hospitals, and to a less extent for church buildings and evangelistic work. Now, opportunities for Christians to make gifts in return do arise. For example, we mentioned a chapel in China to which Buddhists gave out of respect for its pastor of eighteen years' standing. Later, just back of this new chapel, was erected a large and beautiful Buddhist temple. To the cost of this the community was supposed to contribute, including the Christians. The priests made a house-to-house canvass, and many of the Christians, including the pastor, did give.

It does not, of course, follow that because a Hindu admires Christianity and contributes to its work, a Christian will necessarily admire Hinduism and give to its work. It is not merely a matter of broad-mindedness but of actual fact as to worthiness for help. However, there are still questions to be settled. Does the solicitation of gifts from non-Christians place an obligation upon one to give to their religious causes? If Christians on principle, because they regard their religion as the truest and best, refuse to give to non-Christian faiths, ought they to solicit or to receive gifts from those non-Christians who by hypothesis are equally convinced that their own religions are best but who may not have thought the matter through or who think loosely? Is it right for the Jews to receive help for their synagogue from a Roman centurion, but wrong for them in every conceivable case to help some Roman place of worship? It is plain that a Christian's attitude on giving should have an effect on his attitude toward receiving from the adherents of other faiths. The conditions and principles upon which money for Christian work may be solicited and received from non-Christians need to be worked out

no less than the situations, if any, in which it is right and desirable for Christians to make contributions to temples, mosques, and the work of other faiths.

In the fourth place, emphasis must be put on the necessity for discrimination. Even if it be granted that a Christian might on principle give to non-Christian religions, this certainly would not mean giving to any and every such demand. Some temples have dancing girls, or embody no sense of social responsibility, or are far from being places of religious quest. In some places the priests are men without moral or religious leadership. A scholarly witness from Japan says that with the exception of a few brilliant Buddhist scholars and some educated priests, the great majority of the Buddhist priests are still encouraging the most primitive kinds of superstition without much effort proportionate to their power to correct moral and social evils. Observers in China report that temples over whole areas are quite moribund, or merely going on old momentum. Any money supposedly given to help a benevolent enterprise might easily be spent for a costly feast or for superstitious rites meant to secure the favor of the particular god presiding over the enterprise in question. It would not be wise merely to prolong the existence of such institutions after their real life had gone. There is danger of keeping up a shell after the organism has died. A missionary from the Near East said he has seen few *hodjas* (religious teachers) to whose mosques or work he would want to contribute.

Any experienced giver has learned to be discriminating with reference to appeals that come even under supposedly Christian auspices. It would be foolish to be less discriminating for an object connected with another faith. In fact, the very process of discriminating giving

may be a powerful agency of reform. Giving after careful evaluating consideration might do more good than adhering to a rigid rule never to give. That there are devout priests and single-hearted searchers after God among non-Christians need not be questioned.

A concrete instance will illustrate the place of discrimination in the issue of this chapter. Hawaii is famous for its sugar and its pineapples. A plantation may employ as many as two thousand laborers. Twenty or thirty years ago three-fourths of these workmen were Japanese. Their coming to the islands was encouraged by the plantation managers. Most of them readily dropped back from scanty and broken English into their customary Japanese. They were only beginning to be Americanized, and knew nothing of Christianity. The managers naturally wanted them to be contented and able workmen. The problem was not unlike the one which faced Sir John Thynne, who in 1566 was building his manor in England. He wanted the best workmen and they were Scotchmen, but their form of worship was forbidden in England. So he secured a special dispensation from Queen Elizabeth for the first non-conformist chapel in England in order to keep his workmen contented.

Similarly it was early suggested that the Japanese laborers in Hawaii would be happier if their customary religious ministrations were available. Influenced largely by this economic motive, many of the managers built Buddhist temples on their plantations and contributed to the support of Buddhist priests. Of course, some managers would be quite indifferent to the religious problem and would build temples simply as a matter of good business. But if a manager were an earnest Christian, he might come to you asking for advice.

You might lead such a manager to see that he should do nothing toward assisting Buddhism to get a foothold among the young people of the islands. Since he has experienced the value of Christianity and believes it to be the best religion for all men, he should support only Christian work. To do anything else might be to let the Buddhists think that the manager does not care any more for Christianity than for Buddhism. Why, for the sake of the present older generation, establish an institution in the islands that will continue long after that generation has passed away?

Or, you might advise the manager both to make the temples possible and at the same time to contribute to the missionary board of the Hawaiian Evangelical Association. The manager had helped to bring these Japanese to Hawaii; they are not now Christian; there is no human likelihood that this generation of immigrants will soon become Christian; Buddhism affords the only religious ministration that they understand; and, therefore, fairness as well as Christian charity demands that they be helped.

Neither of these solutions seems very satisfactory. In many such cases one does not know all the conditions; hence the next step is not the giving of advice, but a deeper probing into the facts of the situation. It would be found that on those plantations where Buddhist temples and priests had been assisted experience proved that the setting up of these religious institutions of old Japan did much to bind these immigrants to their past. As you got to know the men it would be plain that not all Japanese are Buddhists, any more than all Americans are Christians. Just as there are unchurched in America, so are there untempled among Japanese. One can, therefore, discount any claim that Buddhist temples are

needed for all Japanese. The temples were often used as centers for organizing strikes and other labor troubles so that the economic gain to the management was by no means assured. Hence a discriminating manager would try to eliminate nationalism and labor issues from the problem, making it possible for Japanese to come together as Japanese, without necessarily centering these issues in the temples. To the remnant of really devout Buddhists he might well give something of the religious help they craved and to which they were accustomed. For these, and especially for the others, there would be provided just as effective Christian ministry and witness as a thoroughgoing respect for personality made possible.

Discrimination was used by that Christian who, when approached for a subscription to a Buddhist temple, asked whether the priests took care of orphans or carried on any poor relief. On finding out that they were doing nothing of this sort, he refused. This same man subscribed two yen to a hilltop temple which among other things housed the old wooden statues of the two chiefs who had generated such spirit in a small fishing village that the poverty-stricken peasantry took on new life and the village grew to a prosperous city. The temple was the community museum with one relic going back twelve hundred years. This Christian wanted to help this side of the temple's function in that community. It is this kind of discrimination that led seventy of Tokyo's leading business men (Buddhists and Confucianists) to give $150,000 toward the expenses of the World's Sunday School Convention in 1920. They were not adopting Christianity, but they felt that Japan needed the spiritual impact of the convention. Similarly, many a Hindu and Moslem who contribute, ofttimes most generously, to mission work may have little or no sympathy

with the evangelistic aim of missionaries. They value, however, the humanitarian aspect of the work, the general religious effect, or the educational, medical or economic results. Widespread use has been made of funds from such sources.

In the next place, one of the most important considerations in the background of all these cases is the conception one has of other religions. You would not contribute to a robber's set of tools. You would not give to equip a bootlegger. You would not help to repair a house of prostitution. If a thing is wholly bad, you do not lend it strength. And so, if the non-Christian faiths are of the devil, or if Christianity is wholly of a different order and genus from them all, if these religions can at their best mean nothing to their millions and only keep men from God, you would on principle give no penny to their aid. The sooner these religions are eradicated the better. But, if the distinction is not between wholly true and wholly false, if at least some of the other faiths are in their measure functioning to meet real ethical and spiritual needs among their adherents, if a devoutly religious though defective attitude in a hearer is better soil for the Christian message than a hardened, indifferent, materialized heart, then the problem ceases to be simple. Where it is not a question between completely black and completely white, we may well seek for guidance.

Face yourself with the situation that confronted one who is at the very heart of Christian work in New York City. No one could possibly doubt his belief that Protestantism is on the whole a better, truer approach to God than is Roman Catholicism. And yet, when he found in his suburb a few Roman Catholics struggling to secure a place of worship, he made a contribution to

their fund. He might have said to himself that he unhesitatingly believed in the efficacy of Protestantism and that he should, therefore, invest every available cent in the most direct and effective way of making God known to the world. Instead, he saw that these people needed religious ministration; he felt morally certain that they would not come to the Protestant churches; and he was sure that at times a gesture of good-will does more good than an investment in direct Christian work of one's own type.

On exactly this principle an experienced missionary from Turkey said that he would contribute to a community whose mosque had been destroyed by earthquake. On much the same principle was the decision of a Christian in China who was calling on a gentleman who for years had been a warm friend of the Y. M. C. A., but was not a Christian. The Christian noticed some large iron tiles on the floor and asked his Buddhist friend what they were. The man explained that nearby was the highest and, from the standpoint of Buddhists, the most sacred mountain in China. There were several famous temples on the top. The roof of one of them needed repairing and so the priest in charge had started a movement to get the required tiles by asking people to buy one or more of them at two dollars each. Every contributor had his name cast on the tile he gave. The Christian said he would take two of them, and that he would have taken more if he could have afforded it. As he looks back on his motives, he realizes that he was moved not simply by his friendship for the man or by the fact that this friend's being a Buddhist had not stood in the way of his helping a Christian organization. But he was also influenced by a feeling that Buddhism is a means through which people are looking for truth and

for some way to handle and control the unseen forces about them. Until their inadequate and often superstitious ways could be superseded, he felt the old should have a place in the life of the people.

Would it simplify the problem to consider analogies from far less important aspects of life? Suppose an Oriental villager is committed to the use of oiled paper for windows. You will use glass, and witness to the benefits of glass, and let him look through your clear windows. But ought one to refuse absolutely to help him replace his oiled paper because he has not yet freed himself from an agelong custom? Or, take another illustration: there are small raised mud roads in one of the provinces of China made by the people to convey food supplies in time of flood. They are very poor roads, get washed away, and yet do some good. Now suppose Westerners come along and urge the use of aeroplanes as being surer means of relief in time of flood. If you are assured that literally millions will not use the aeroplane, you will, of course, carry on your demonstrations of the superior way; but should absolutely nothing be given to help rebuild the roads which alone those backward millions will use?

The illustration of the roads in China is manifestly imperfect, but somewhat the same problem must have been faced by that noble Christian woman, Miss Grace Dodge. It is known that she gave considerable sums for Jewish women's associations. She saw they were not getting the help they needed in the Christian associations. She felt assured that no large number would become Christians. And so for the sake of the girls she helped them to get in touch with the best of their own tradition.

In fact, the issue between the abstract best and the

actual living situation meets each of us almost every day. A score of requests for subscriptions come to our desks. Few of us settle on one cause as the single and absolute best. We diversify our gifts, thus making an effort to show sympathy and interest in a wider range than could be justified on an abstract standard of a single best. We aim to let intelligent love be the determining factor in our decisions rather than rule of thumb or routine precedents. If it be suggested that all such gifts by a Christian are for the single object of the Kingdom, we have before us at once the question of this chapter—can a gift for religious purposes to adherents of another faith under any conceivable circumstances be a gift to the Kingdom of God?

The Roman Catholic position is that a voluntary contribution to idolatry is not permissible. In 1840 Christians in the Orient were permitted to help build a Moslem mosque, but only because they were compelled to by the Turks. A different answer was given in 1851 by the Holy Office in reply to the question whether Christians were allowed to cooperate in building a pagan temple because they feared for their lives, or were in danger of being exiled. There is an essential difference between a mosque and a pagan temple, in that the latter involves idol worship, whereas the former does not. On the other hand, as early as 1645 it was decided that Christians may contribute to public demonstrations, even though idolatrous customs may be connected with them, provided these demonstrations may be interpreted as signs of public joy, and with the understanding that the intention of contributing to idolatry is never permissible.[1]

[1] Quoted from C. A. Bachofen, "A Commentary on Canon Law," Vol. 6, pp. 332, 333.

IV

Several more thoughts should be added to the six foregoing considerations. In the vast number of cases creative love can find ways of expressing brotherly goodwill about which there can be no difference of opinion. One could refuse the flowers for the idol ceremony, carefully explaining why, but could place one's garden at the Hindu's disposal whenever he wanted them for a sick friend or for a hospital. One could try to get the priest along the Yangtze River to understand why you feel you could not have a part in forwarding Buddhism, and yet could offer him bed or food in case of misfortune or special difficulty or in some other way aggressively seek some opportunity of showing kindness or generosity. Captain Dollar might have told the rebuilder of the Ling Ying temple that he did not see his way to making possible the most striking architectural feature of a non-Christian place of worship, but that to show his good-will he would endow a school, improve a road, build a bridge, or make possible a library. The Christian public could make subscriptions to the general funds for earthquake relief in Japan, throwing the responsibility upon the individuals relieved for using any of their meager funds for rebuilding their temples. The Hawaiian planters might have given the Japanese laborers wages that would have enabled them to build their own temples. Certainly such constructive measures should be sought and explored before paying tithes to mosques and temples.

When the Japanese American Society appealed for funds to repair, as a memorial, the temple in which Townsend Harris signed the Japanese American Treaty of 1858, only one missionary subscribed. Others realized

that there were other ways of honoring Townsend Harris than by perpetuating a structure which, if Buddhism were really vital to the people, could easily be repaired by themselves.

In one Chinese city where the guilds were in the habit of assessing fees largely used for superstitious gifts to the gods, the Christians established good relations and the reputation for community spirit by offering to pay double the amount thus assessed toward funds for the repair of bridges, roads, and the city wall. This was a fine example of readiness to go the second mile. Thus there are unquestionably circumstances where Christians can hew close to the line, choose some common object in which both sides unreservedly believe, find some type of social service less controversial in its nature and more explicitly revealing the spirit of Christ. Usually non-Christians respect one for loyalty to one's religion.

Again, no general rule can be given, such as never to give or always to give. The detailed circumstances of the living situation must often determine. If that Hindu asking for the garden flowers for his idol worship were a boy from a mission school or college who had often had the question of idolatry raised in class, one might press the issue sharply by refusing. If the same request came from a simple illiterate woman, one might grant it and say nothing to her at the time. Later you might ask her to tell you what she experienced in her worship. You would then be free to share your own experience and conception of God. To share gives offense to no one; but to deny the truth of another's experience of God is apt to set up an antagonism toward us and more particularly toward the God we would reveal. There are those who would refuse to give to a Buddhist temple in Japan where Buddhism is dominant and

should be able to look after its own, who, nevertheless, would be willing to give to a Buddhist temple in Honolulu, or to a small and poor Roman Catholic group in the midst of a wealthy Protestant community.

Moreover, one should not confuse a religious system with an instance of human need. An able and deeply spiritual missionary still remembers with regret an incident that happened during his first year in India. Two Hindu women came to his home asking for alms. They had been on a pilgrimage to some shrine. Their husbands had died on the journey and they had been left with young children. Even his Moslem servant urged him to help these two Hindu women. But since the pilgrimage had been idolatrous, he refused. He now thinks his Moslem servant was in this instance more Christian than he. An eager constructive love in the presence of human need knows no compartments.

The object of this chapter has not been to decide whether or not you should buy a two-dollar tile for a Buddhist temple, i. e., whether a proportionately small gift may be given to another religion. It certainly is not meant to suggest that we begin subsidizing the erection of mosques and temples, nor that we start giving roses to servants for their Buddhas. But increasingly each of us is standing at this world's crossroads. Through these complex religious situations, we are eager to reach out toward the Spirit of our Master, and to catch a love that will be both loyally discriminating and unconventionally creative.

CHAPTER V

ENRICHING ANOTHER FAITH

I

In the last chapter we considered the wisdom of material donations to other faiths. But what shall we do about opportunities for making immaterial contributions, such as the sharing of inspiration or principles? Shall we begrudge to active proponents of another faith ideas and methods that will strengthen the influence and prestige of this faith? Or shall we freely give the best we have even when this prolongs or enriches the life of a rival faith? A few concrete situations will focus our thought.

The prospective head of the Zoroastrian community in India came to an educational center in America for study. He took courses in a theological seminary, studied methods of religious education under one of our foremost leaders, and asked to be shown all that would help him as the future leader of Zoroastrianism in India. Now, anything that makes Zoroastrianism more acceptable or more persuasive or more powerful would seem to delay the day when Zoroastrians will see the truth in Christianity. The more effective this prospective high priest becomes, the more apt are they to remain satisfied with their religion. Such development may put off

for a generation their being baptized. If, then, we send missionaries to convert Zoroastrians to Christianity and if there is any urgency in the missionary enterprise, how can we be a party to making their high priest more efficient? If, as we say, it makes a vital difference whether people hear of Jesus in this generation, does it not make a difference whether we do something in India that will postpone the formal acceptance of Jesus for another generation?

On the other hand, one may reason that this young man from India has a real felt need; that his desire was an expression of the highest he knows; that Christianity should manifest the love of God through infinite good-will to all men; that the occasion of his need affords a wide-open opportunity, not only to show kindness but to make a contact which can be followed up in hopeful ways; or that one cannot imagine our Lord turning away anyone who should come to him to learn with the intention of putting his increased ability at the service of the highest he knows.

II

The problem arises more frequently in Christian work abroad. A summer training school for Sunday-school workers is held each year at Karuizawa, Japan. The Christian principal frequently receives requests from Buddhist priests to be allowed to attend these courses with the manifest intention of improving the Buddhist schools which in so many ways are copying methods associated with Christian Sunday schools. The provision of apparatus and equipment is relatively easy, but they know very little about modern ideals and methods of religious education. In 1924 a Buddhist

Sunday School Association sent two delegates to this training school. After these Buddhists returned home, they sent a hearty letter of appreciation for what they had heard and for the friendly treatment they had received. In the closing session one of them made a short speech of thanks and said that although he had attended a summer school given by his own sect every year, he wanted to come again to this Christian training school. Similarly, a training school in Kuling, China, has frequently had Buddhists enrolled.

The problem is met again when a certain Buddhist priest who conducts a Sunday school makes a practice of coming to a Christian chapel in the neighborhood to listen and get ideas for his own school. In another city representatives of the priests went to an official in the public school department and asked for a lecturer on Sunday-school methods since their Sunday schools were not very successful. The official said he could not provide a Buddhist specialist but that he could send a Christian. The offer was accepted,[1] so that a Christian helped to perfect Buddhist religious education.

The enlightened ruler of one of India's native states became dissatisfied with the qualifications of the Hindu priests in his area, so he called upon a Christian missionary acquaintance for help. The missionary was accustomed to arranging courses of study for the training of younger ministers. He also possessed a good working knowledge of Hinduism and of the available books on the subject. At the request of the ruler, a three-year course of study for Brahman priests was worked out, modeled upon a course for Christian preachers, and this course was promulgated by legislative act.

[1] "The Christian Movement in Japan," Vol. 23, p. 274.

A Hindu leader in Ceylon started a girls' school near an established mission school and in opposition to it. The teachers in the Christian school had to face this problem: whether they would call upon the English lady who was principal of the Hindu school; whether they would encourage any of their graduates to teach in the school; whether they would invite the new school to meet them in games and contests, whether they would help the other school to get the Girl Guide movement started; whether, in short, they were to rejoice in the success of the Hindu school or to be happy in its failure.

As you think over this question, it may interest you to follow the thought of one who had returned on furlough to America and who was eager to get back to his work abroad in order that he, along with his direct witness to Christianity, might share with Buddhist leaders what he had learned of how character grows and what are the laws of learning. In his area there were seventy-five thousand Buddhist children. He could scarcely imagine more than a third of these children becoming Christians. What about the rest? The Buddhist priests are in touch with these boys and with their parents, and he is not. Why should he not help them to do better work for these boys? After all, he believes in working for men as men and in regarding the attainment of abundant life as of more importance than the name by which people are called.

However, this man knows from experience how hard it is to follow without hesitation or calculation the principle of generous sharing. In his Association work he put in tennis courts, and the Buddhists secured courts also. He started boys' work; they followed. He put up a building; they did likewise. More than once he trained young Buddhists in tennis until they could beat

him, and finally they won the city championship, only to have these men go over to the Buddhist Association and strengthen its prestige. Under such circumstances it was hard to forget the fact that in community projects increased support was bound to follow increased Buddhist enthusiasm; and to fix one's mind on the fact that, as a result of the new Japanese courts, more boys in that city were playing tennis and thus were being kept from gambling.

There is a Young Men's Buddhist Association in Honolulu, one of several branches in the islands linked together in a Territorial Conference. It has a thousand members, runs a night school, issues a paper called *Brotherhood,* encourages language study and provides various amusements. Among other objects these Associations aim to cultivate more religious enthusiasm in the minds of both young and old people by giving them a clear understanding of the Buddhist doctrine, and to this end are merging the religious departments of their various units into a Society for the Promotion of Buddhist knowledge.[1] Suppose you were the general secretary of the four Young Men's Christian Associations in Honolulu, and the Buddhists came for helpful suggestions as to how to make their boys' work more effective, or how better to equip their games department, or to let them have a skilled secretary to get them started. Manifestly the more attractive their buildings and activities, the more surely will young people be attracted to these Buddhist associations, the more satisfying will the Buddhist system seem, and the more unlikely will they be to get into touch with organized Christianity. From this single standpoint one might

[1] *The Pacific Buddhist,* August 1, 1927.

begrudge the assistance that would seem to put off for a generation or more the time when these young Hawaiians would be Christians.

About fifteen years ago, the same issue was faced in northern India. Out of the score of arts colleges in the Punjab, the mission college at Lahore was the only one that provided a common room or social center for the students. In the other colleges practically no provision was made for social life. They had not thought of putting a game room or reading room in the residence halls. Eventually the authorities of a college under the management of the Arya Samaj, the most persistent and bitter opponents of Christianity in North India, sent representatives to the mission college to look over their system of common rooms for social and recreational purposes, and to get a copy of their constitution and working plans. To aid the Aryas to duplicate this feature would reduce by so much the contrast between the two colleges, and might to that extent lessen the prestige of the mission college. Should the authorities of the mission college share to the maximum or to the minimum? In this same province a Christian theological seminary was approached by a delegation of Arya Samajists that they might learn all about the courses and methods of the seminary. The principal refused to tell them anything on the ground that they were enemies of the Christian Church. Just what is the philosophy of religion that should lie back of such decisions?

During the war the Turkish Viceroy of Syria sent Jamil Bey to visit the American University at Beirut, for the Viceroy had recently appointed him Director of the newly established Saladin University in Jerusalem. He was to stay for six weeks, live among the teachers

and students, study their methods, and if possible discover the secret of the success their graduates had obtained. Jamil Bey frankly acknowledged, "We need your help all along the line, but especially in the training of our Moslem religious leaders. We are groping in the dark and we need a helping hand." Principal Bliss welcomed him and tried in every way to help him. "We are here," he said, "not as rivals; we are here to share with the people of the East the best things we have in the West, or rather to exchange the best things that East and West have received. For the whole world needs the whole world."[1]

The issue of this chapter is further raised when as an experienced inspector of schools you are asked to visit and constructively criticize a set of Hindu schools; or when a Baptist University in America sets up special courses for those preparing to teach in Jewish religious schools or to engage in social service through Jewish agencies. The issue is raised when Dharmapala, the recognized Buddhist leader in Ceylon, goes to China in the hope of stirring up the Buddhists to send a missionary to India, and when a Christian missionary consents to accompany Dharmapala to a Buddhist abbot, arranges for his meeting with the monks, and translates throughout for this Buddhist devotee. What would you do if the young people of the Hongwanji temple were starting a monthly religious periodical and wanted your assistance in phrasing the English? Suppose that some Buddhist leaders came into your district with a special moving picture film depicting the strength of their sect in Japan, that your portable projector and generator were

[1] Cf. *The Atlantic Monthly*, Vol. 125, p. 664.

the only machines available without considerable expense, and that they began in their customary indirect way to get the privilege of using your machine. Would you, as the local missionary did do, personally set up the machine, operate it for them two out of the seven evenings, and seek to impress upon them that there was absolutely no necessity for indirect approach inasmuch as you would be willing to cooperate?

It is worth while to stop and attempt to formulate the attitude one should take toward such opportunities, and the philosophy that should lie back of the attitude.

III

This issue arises in a somewhat different form when non-Christians seek the right to incorporate Christian hymns into their hymn-book. Mahatma Gandhi has put eight or nine Christian hymns into the book used at his Ashram. Would you cheerfully and unhesitatingly grant the privilege, thus enriching their selection even when the hymns might contain no distinctively Christian terminology?

Less simple is the problem presented by the large cardboard hymn-sheet until recently used in the Hongwanji temple, Honolulu. Among thirty-nine hymns were various ones only slightly changed from Christian hymns. Each is marked "Adapted." Below are the first verses of some of them.

O for a thousand tongues to sing
My holy Buddha's praise;
The glories of my teacher great,
The triumphs of his grace.

Buddha, the name that kills our fears,
That bids our sorrow cease;
'Tis music in the seeker's ears,
'Tis life, and health, and peace.

Buddha, Lord, O pilot me,
Over life's tempestuous sea;
Ignorance like waves o'erthrow,
Hiding sorrow, change and woe;
Buddha, Guide, O pilot me,
To the other shore with Thee.

Lead Kindly Light—(three verses)

Hark, hark, my soul, the children's songs are swelling
O'er earth's green fields and ocean's wave-beat shore;
How sweet the truth those blessed strains are telling
Of that new day when hate shall be no more.
Children of Buddha, children of light,
Singing to welcome the wanderers of the night.

Onward, Buddhist soldiers,
Marching as to war,
With the truth of Buddha
Going on before!
Truth, the royal master
Leads against the foe;
Forward into battle,
See truth's banners go.

Buddha, the very thought of Thee
With sweetness fills the breast;
But greater far Thy law to see,
And in its Truth find rest.
No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find
A sweeter sound than Buddha's name,
The teacher of mankind.

Joy to the world! The Buddha has come;
Let earth receive his truth;
Let every heart prepare him room,
And heaven and nature sing.

Stand up, stand up for Buddha!
Ye soldiers of His truth;
Lift high Truth's royal banner,
It must not suffer loss;
From victory unto victory
Truth shall his army lead,
'Til every hate is vanquished,
And love is Lord indeed.

It might be well to stop and think out the reasons for being glad or sorry that such selections were being sung in the leading Buddhist temple of Hawaii. What steps of encouragement or discouragement should a resident Christian take with reference to this kind of practice? Ought he to make a protest and break off friendly relations with the high priest if he persists in using the sheets? Should he suggest that the mere word "adapted" is hardly sufficient under the circumstances; that at least

it should be stated that the hymns have been altered from Christian sources? Or should he hunt up a few more equally suitable hymns and take them to the head of the temple?

On the one hand, if Buddhists first hear the adapted hymns in their temple, it will lessen the effect of hearing the originals later in a church. In so far as these adapted hymns give vitality to the Buddhist service, they enable Buddhism to obtain a greater hold on their youth, lessen the appeal of Christianity through contrast, and consequently would seem to make it harder to get Christian converts. It would seem possible, simply from the standpoint of literary honesty, to insist on fuller credit being given.

On the other hand, it is a question whether it is any worse for Buddhists to take over Christian hymns than for the Christian Church in India to fill hymn-books with Indian tunes without bothering to acknowledge that they came out of Hindu culture. As a matter of fact, in Honolulu the young people of the community sometimes come together for a patriotic celebration or a funeral. They would not feel so estranged if they were already familiar with the tunes and could enter into the singing. One might rejoice that Christianity seems to be able to meet certain needs that Buddhism has not satisfied. Certainly the dominant emphasis of Buddhism is not along such lines. You may be glad for such sentiments to be loved and developed under any name. Hence you may wish to seek ways of deepening natural friendship with the head of the temple and only eventually suggest that just as a matter of literary honesty fuller credit should be given. You may have to acknowledge that this second attitude does not immediately make for converts. Thus its justification would have to come

from a long view of what is going on, and after the people had come to appreciate for themselves the real source and inspiration of the adopted ideals. In any case we will want to approximate that quality of solicitude which Jesus had when he said, "He that is not against me is for me," "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these my brethren, even these least, ye did it unto me," and "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shall find it."

IV

If we reverse the situation, it may help us to arrive at a right attitude toward the issue raised in this chapter. Recently the head of the department of religion in one of our Western colleges spent a year of travel in Europe and Asia. Her mission was to meet the leaders of thought in the various countries, to study various religious movements, and to gather a rich experience which would bring to her college the world's best creative thought in the field of religious education. By prearrangement one month was spent as a guest in the home of Mahatma Gandhi. Ought he, as a professing Hindu, to have begrudged any insight or inspiration which that month gave a teacher of another faith?

Missionaries have frequently asked outstanding non-Christians to address their union meetings on some such subject as "How Christianity can be made more effective in India," or "The missionary enterprise as seen by a liberal Hindu." It would be possible for missionaries to seek such addresses in the spirit of securing tips for a competitive religious struggle from semi-traitors to another faith. Sometimes the generous statements of such speakers in regard to Christianity are quoted as

evidence of the growing triumph of Christianity, and this tends to awaken resentment in those who have thus spoken. Or, such invitations might be evidence of a growing spiritual humility on the part of the Christian hosts. Assuming as unquestioned the loyalty of such non-Christian leaders to their own faiths, did they do wrong to give friendly counsel and advice to propagandists of another faith? If a Christian were asked to go to a Hindu or Buddhist conference should he go and share his best judgment as to how these other faiths could best serve humanity in the same broad spirit that many a high-minded non-Christian has addressed missionary gatherings? The ancestors of Prince Tokugawa excluded Christianity from Japan. Should the Y. M. C. A. have asked him to be one of the advisers of their Patron's Association, unless they on principle would have been willing to help the Buddhist Association? When the Bengal Missionary Conference gave an urgent invitation to a professor in Tagore's school at Bolpur to address them on "the weak places in missionary work," were they making the kind of request to which they in turn should respond? Or is the nature of Christianity such that it is right for it to be advanced by members of other faiths, and wrong for Christianity's adherents to assist any but their own? If members of other faiths recognize that Christianity is worth helping, it does not necessarily follow that other religions are worth helping. Here again, it is not a matter of broad-mindedness, but of the appraisal of facts.

V

The final decision on the issue of this chapter is bound to be influenced by one's general conception of other

faiths. Some think of Buddhists and Hindus as the enemies of Christianity, and of mission work in terms of warfare or conquest or commercial rivalry. Such people begrudge helping those whom they consider their opponents—it would be giving away their ammunition. There are others who think of Buddhists and Hindus as human beings needing more abundant life and so do not hesitate to help them to make any possible advance.

Furthermore, Christians must decide whether they want to meet Buddhism at its worst or at its best. If the former, they will try to set up a blockade so that good methods and principles will not reach the rival faith; if the latter, they will rejoice at every improvement made.

To begrudge sharing our superior methodology or pedagogy would seem to imply that the superiority of Christianity is somehow connected with these things. In the past Christianity has, no doubt, gained prestige from its association with modern education, scientific civilization, and higher economic levels. But the distinctive superiority of Christianity lies elsewhere, and ought to reveal itself with even greater precision if the other faiths have no handicaps that are not inherent in their systems.

However, when we unhesitatingly assist non-Christian leaders to learn from us all they can that will make their faiths more effective, surely it is essential that the Christianity in us be at its best. There must be a very deep and real spiritual power and a very genuine spirit of love in the lives of Christians if adherents of non-Christian faiths at their best are to see any superiority in Christianity. In the long run, presumably, it is those who are most loving and embody the most of God's truth who will be most convincing.

Most Christians would not spend any great proportion of their time building up Buddhist Sunday schools or developing a Zoroastrian high priest. Valuable as such work would be, there is something far more constructive. But while one would not start training schools for non-Christian religious leaders, nor launch forth on a comprehensive theory that non-Christians must necessarily first progress in their own faith, yet one would certainly wish to avoid a calculating attitude and would hope to catch some of Christ's spirit of giving out as freely as God bestows his sunshine.

CHAPTER VI

INTERRELIGIOUS COOPERATION IN COUNSEL

I

With the growing interest during the last half century in the study of living religions and with the increased facilities for intercourse between all the ends of the earth it is simply a matter of course that the adherents of the different faiths of the world should in various ways come together to talk over the grounds of their beliefs, to compare their spirit and aims, and to see by various tests which is the most worthy of universal acceptance.

Sometimes a representative of one faith is asked to present its most important and distinctive positions before the adherents of another. A Protestant church asks a rabbi to take the Sunday morning service. A well-educated and leading Buddhist is passing through a city in West China, and the Y. W. C. A. invites him to address the Sunday afternoon meeting. The leader of the local Chundo Kyo (the Religion of the Heavenly Way), an influential indigenous religion having about a million members and controlling one of the largest dailies and a popular magazine for children, is asked to set forth his message before the students of a theological seminary in Korea. A Buddhist university in Tokyo employs a Japanese Christian to lecture on Christianity, while the Shingon sect exchanges professors every year

with a Christian institution. A missionary in Jerusalem feels that if he were to ask people to hear him without himself being willing to extend the same courtesy to members of these same faiths, this would mean that they are more Christian than he. Hence he has the leading Jew lecture in his hall on Judaism, and a man selected by the Moslem Chief Council expounds Islam. Recently in the middle west of the United States an exchange of lecturers took place between a Christian theological college and a rabbinical seminary,—the rabbi lecturing to the Christian students on Judaism, while a Christian theologian expounded Christianity to Jewish students.

Sometimes a conference is arranged to see what contribution each religion can make to a common pressing problem. At the first Institute of Pacific Relations in Honolulu adherents of various religions presented papers as the basis for a discussion as to the solutions which these faiths could suggest for the problems of the Pacific.

In 1912, the Minister of Home Affairs in Japan called together representatives of the Shinto, Buddhist, and Christian faiths with a view to securing a better mutual understanding, and with the object of helping the cooperation of education and religion in the training of the young.[1] The Eastern Branch of the great Shinshu Sect of Buddhists were quite unwilling to enter into conference on an equal footing with the Christian Church, but otherwise representatives of the three religions responded cordially. A second conference was held in 1914.

It is for an important common objective that the Uni-

[1] "The Christian Movement in Japan," Vol. 10, pp. 12-15; Vol. 12, p. 28.

versal Religious Peace Conference has been projected for 1930 by the Church Peace Union. In this men and women of all the historic organized religions who believe that religion offers a means of establishing permanent peace on earth will participate. The official call by this Christian organization says that the purpose is to mobilize the forces of religion in all nations in a concerted effort against war, to make known the best content of each religion relating to international justice and goodwill, and to compare the ideals of human brotherhood and world peace as indicated by the various religions.

Sometimes the meeting centers around good-fellowship. In 1926 a dinner was held in Chicago where seventy prominent Jews each brought as his guest "my best Christian friend," and where addresses were made by a Roman Catholic priest, a Protestant, and two rabbis. In a New York church a meeting was held where Roman Catholicism, Protestant Christianity, Judaism, Theosophy, New Thought, and Ethical Culture were represented. The music included a Sanskrit peace chant, American spirituals sung by a colored woman, the twenty-third psalm sung by a Jewish cantor, and community singing. In both these meetings pleas were made for mutual tolerance based, not upon indifference, but upon mutual understanding and appreciation in order that dangerous gulfs between races, nationalities, classes, and creeds might be bridged.

With interest in religions so general, student groups voluntarily take up the study. The girls in one of India's Christian colleges choose subjects of an ethical or social nature for discussion at their weekly meetings. A Hindu girl gives the Hindu teaching on the topic and outlines the changes that her community could advocate. Then a Moslem and a Christian girl give the teachings

of their respective systems, after which the meeting is thrown open for general discussion. A group of young men in Peking undertook to learn what value the different religions—Islam, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and Christianity—had for new China. They read some of the great literature of each in order to discover its contribution. Then they went to an official of that religion to hear what he could say in its favor and to see its worship. Finally, they got into touch with as many followers of the religion as possible, and tried to estimate their behavior and daily life.

Interreligious discussion was associated with united worship in a carefully arranged retreat for the Hindu, Moslem, and Christian students of Madras city in the fall of 1927. The object of the retreat was to make it possible for each student to get better acquainted with the fundamental teachings of his own religion, and also in a sympathetic way with faiths other than his own. The promoters of the retreat believed that religion ought not to be allowed to remain an unduly divisive force. Therefore, provision was made both for communal and for united worship. Three separate pamphlets for personal devotion, prepared respectively by a Hindu, a Moslem, and a Christian, were made the basis of personal devotion at seven in the morning. At eight the whole camp came together for united worship; and quotations from the different scriptures were read, with a short period for silent meditation after each passage. At nine they divided into a Hindu, a Moslem, and a Christian group for discussion of the practice of religion in daily life, and the findings of these different groups were read to the whole camp. At two-thirty all the students assembled to discuss what practical service they as students could perform. The three successive

evening meetings of the retreat were addressed respectively by a Hindu on the life of a Hindu saint; by a Moslem on the life of a Moslem saint; and by a Christian on the life of a Christian saint. Each speaker was expected to give a positive message and not a comparative presentation. Such a retreat would doubtless be approved by one who interprets the missionary task as sharing the rich experience of the Christian Church and entering into partnership with any given group in a great spiritual quest.

II

Various objections are raised to any formal presentation of Christianity along with other faiths. Some interpret any liberal and generous position with reference to other faiths as a symptom of the decay of Christianity. Some feel that the sovereignty of our Lord is denied by a common platform which is not sanctioned by his Word. They feel that it is playing fast and loose with truth and coquetting with false religions. Non-Christian faiths, as some see them, have so much error in them, and have done so much to blind and destroy men, that they really have no right to be. Fellowship with them is the unscriptural fellowship of light with darkness.

Some would thankfully admit that there are good men among the adherents of other religions, but to them this is merely evidence that God has not left men even when men have left God. This goodness is to be accounted for by that remnant of natural religion which is in every man. The adherents of other faiths are good in spite of their creed and are most blessed when they do not live according to their sacred books.

Some think it is too generous to attribute the various

religions of the world to the world's groping after God. They find the apostle Paul giving an entirely different genesis. He recognized that men were groping after God, and that God in his goodness had given them a measure of light which, had they followed, would have led on to perfect day. But they did not like the light, and "when they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up to a reprobate mind."[1] If, then, these religions are the result of reprobate minds, how can Christians have any dealings with them?

For some Christianity is *the one* perfect and revealed religion, and therefore not only has nothing to learn from other religions, but also cannot submit to being classed with them. Nor can Christianity enter a representative religious conference in which each religion appears as such and in equal association with other religions. For Christianity to appear on the same platform with other faiths would be equivalent to acknowledging the others' equality and the parity of their position and claims. It is all right to confer or to work with any human beings as human beings. We may properly be brothers to every Moslem, Hindu, or Buddhist. But Christianity and these other religions are not to be thought of as brother religions.

Others feel that Christianity is too sacred for such treatment as it would likely receive at the hands of non-Christians. While they can understand how the Christian religion might produce its evidences before any assembly, nevertheless any real presentation of that religion must go far beyond the question of evidences, and must subject to public discussion that faith and devotion which are its characteristics, and which some

[1] Rom. 1:28.

feel belong to a region too sacred for such treatment.[1] Such conferences would only provide a sounding board for misrepresentations of Christianity.

Some fear people will be misled as to the nature of other faiths. They would be quite willing for Hinduism as it is actually found in India to be compared with Christianity. But they would hold that it would be almost impossible to do this outside of India. In a general discussion a representative of Hinduism might cull the most excellent moral maxims from his sacred books, might even dovetail Christian principles into those of Hinduism, and utterly fail to show what Hinduism is in the towns and villages of India. And very likely a Hindu would portray his religion at its best—as would almost any other religionist.

Others would rule out discussion that is public. They would be quite willing to invite a Moslem or Hindu to their home or would willingly go to the home of a non-Christian to converse on their respective religions. That would be a brotherly and a Christian thing to do. But principle is involved for such objectors when Truth and Error are invited to meet on an equal platform before the public. This would be only to flatter a man, who is believed to be embracing deadly error, into the belief that he has a religion worthy to be placed side by side with that of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Roman Catholics are warned against disputations and conferences with non-Catholics. To hold such a disputation or conference, especially in public, requires the special permission of the Holy See. This has been the attitude in the Roman Church ever since the seventeenth

[1] Cf. the letter written by the Archbishop of Canterbury refusing to have a part in the World's Parliament of Religions, "The World's Parliament of Religions," John Henry Barrows, pp. 20-22.

century. Congresses or parliaments of religion are not absolutely forbidden; they are tolerated only when there is a hope of a greater good. The Sacred Congregation has often expressly forbidden them on the ground that false eloquence may cause error seemingly to triumph over truth.[1]

III

On the other hand, there are those who recognize the fact, which they regard as indisputable, that there are on this planet a number of religions among which Christianity numerically counts as one. A common platform simply symbolizes this world fact within the limits of a single hall. Any other position would leave no foothold for the modern study of the science of religion.

There are many earnest and devout Christians who feel that they would be untrue to the meek and lowly One whom they follow if they felt so proud over the values in Christianity that they could not condescend to welcome and weigh the worth of other human strivings after God. Such Christians distinguish sharply between doctrinal equality and parliamentary equality. The former as between the various faiths they would explicitly deny; the latter they would as explicitly assert as not only possible but helpful. Far from feeling that they are dishonoring their Lord, they are convinced that one of the greatest ways to make him known lies in mutual sharing. Instead of regarding Christianity as too sacred to be discussed in public, they believe that such public sharing can rise to a fraternal devotional and courteous level. They have no fear for Jesus Christ,

[1] Cf. C. A. Bachofen, "A Commentary on Canon Law," Vol. 6, p. 336.

and hence are ready to welcome the best and wisest men of other faiths to be heard patiently and in the spirit of genuine love for truth. These earnest and devout Christians are willing to let Christianity stand in the midst of other religions as one among many, confident that neither Christianity nor Christ will suffer by comparison. If only for a given people they can introduce Christ among the stars they believe that he will vindicate himself as moon and finally as sun. Almost with these symbols does a great Buddhistic scholar describe in imagination the reflections of a Chinese pilgrim to Lanka (Ceylon) about 400 A. D. The pilgrim had just heard from a merchant-sailor about another Lord than Buddha, an Anointed One, a King of Peace, who for the mighty love he bore the world became a servant and endured to die.

> E'en so, if this strange Syrian tale be true
> Shall the Anointed brighten all the East
> And our clear moonlight yield to radiant Dawn?
> Hath not the moon herself a borrowed glow,
> Nor grudgeth yielding to the Source of Light?[1]

Striking confirmation of this "ungrudging yielding to the Source of Light" is given by Stanley Jones after an extended series of round table conferences with the finest spirits of the various Indian religions. "There was not a single situation that I can remember where before the close of the Round Table Conference Christ was not in moral and spiritual command of the situation."[2] This mastery by Christ came not by loud assertion or

[1] Kenneth Saunders in the "International Review of Missions," Vol. 11, pp. 401-405.

[2] E. Stanley Jones, "Christ at the Round Table," pp. 50, 56.

through the pleading of clever advocates but by what he is and does.

Unfortunately there are those who misunderstand the religious faith of Christians who are willing to hear without reproach or assault whatever sincere conviction any human soul may hold. But many Christians believe that they can come together with adherents of other faiths in mutual confidence and respect, without the least surrender or compromise of the things which on either side are believed to be truth or duty. Given participants with real religious experience, they believe that the result need not be indifferentism in regard to the important peculiarities distinguishing the religions of the world.

IV

Various objectives may be sought in conferences with adherents of other faiths. One of the simplest is the promotion of harmonious personal relations and a mutual understanding between followers of the various faiths. There is much that needs to be done in the way of developing interreligious conciliation, and the recognition of good intention on the part of religious men.

Some wish to set an example to others and so encourage their search after truth. Some wish to inquire what light each religion has offered or may offer to the other religions of the world, or to discover what light religions have thrown on the great problems of the present age. Some wish to see how many important truths the various religions hold in common, and by closer touch with intelligent representatives of these faiths to see how many of these supposedly common points are only verbally so and how many are in reality common.

Often the various religions have been misjudged and misunderstood because words have borne a meaning radically different from that which they were intended to bear, and from a disregard of the distinctions between appearances and facts, and between symbols and the things signified and represented.

Discussion helps to define the issues on which agreement has not yet been reached in such a way as to facilitate future discussion and so bring about more complete understanding and closer fellowship. It makes, for example, considerable difference whether we must continue to think that that classic utterance of the Upanishads, "Thou art that," necessarily stands for monistic pantheism within which there is no room for "otherness." Or, whether there are Hindus who now say it as an affirmation of the ultimate identity of the transcendent unconditioned Spirit of God with the immanent spirit that dwells in the heart of man. It is well to register certain levels of general agreement as well as to localize and define the outstanding disagreements. There is every reason why earnest endeavors should be made to remove the mutual misconceptions which prevail between religions. It cannot be good for us to cherish ideas of each other's faith which are not true. Most of us would agree that two religious communities, related as are Jews and Christians, should solve their problem of living together, not on a basis of mutual ignorance and misunderstanding, but by a procedure more in accord with scientific method and the best spirit common to these faiths. Is there any reason why this principle should not apply to any two religions?

Perhaps the most common objective would be to discover, from those most competent to speak for a given

faith, what are deemed to be the important distinctive truths held and taught by that faith. Students of religion have learned that they must not be content with their own interpretation of the religious classics of another faith. The earnest believer in any religion views his faith from a point of view which is precious to him. It is this glint which renders it to him at once so creditable and so excellent that it commands his admiration. To understand a religion, discerning students wish to know it as it is held vitally, in the present, by its leaders and champions. For a time, at least, such students desire to look at a religion from the point of view of its champions.

One of our greatest scholars of Buddhism tells how he belonged for some time to just such a group representing many religions in India, and of the many delightful evenings they spent without heat or conscious propaganda, learning one another's point of view and growing, as they all believed, in the process. He tells how the great Buddhist scholar, Oldenberg, coming into their midst, said: "I did not know such a thing was possible." "It is possible," continues Professor Saunders, "and it ought to be done in every intellectual center in the world; indeed, the mutual respect and understanding of the nations cannot be based upon rock until numerous groups of this kind are meeting in an honest attempt to study the great streams which have made our civilizations what they are." [1]

Discussion can act as a religious prophylactic. Where young people are practically certain to come under the influence of a powerful non-Christian faith in their environment, it may be best to see and to study this re-

[1] Kenneth J. Saunders, "Epochs in Buddhist History," p. 8.

ligion at its best. This was partly the reason why the principal of a most successful Christian boarding school in Ceylon arranged for Buddhism to be taught by a leader of this faith. The principal has a conviction that the underlying thought of the old faiths should be taught from a sympathetic and fully appreciative standpoint. He feels that it is important for Christians to know the old faiths at their best. Their Christianity should develop alongside the thought of their own country. Sooner or later they are sure to meet those objections to Christianity which are common among the priests of non-Christian faiths. Should these objections not arise in the minds of these young Christians whilst they are still in a Christian environment, they are sure, he feels, to do so after they are alone and out of reach of those who might help them.

The two conferences called by the Japanese Minister of Home Affairs, to which reference was made above, served as a public recognition of the importance of religious instruction among a people increasingly tending to look upon religion as superstition, and showed that Christianity was no longer considered the religion merely of a foreign country. More than the others, the Christians raised certain questions of a very practical nature, thus evidencing a real power for the moral improvement of the country. The Christians felt that they had nothing to lose, and everything to gain from such conferences, while the Shintoists and Buddhists came rather reluctantly to the second conference.

Still other objectives are brought out by the West Hall Brotherhood at the American University at Beirut.[1] A study of their missionary problems and opportunities

[1] Cf. *The Journal of Religion*, Vol. 2, pp. 303-309.

had led the university to believe that the great need of the Near East was to join educated men of moral purpose, but of different faiths, in a united effort to develop those spiritual ideas and tendencies which they experience in common. Through such fellowship and cooperation they hoped to introduce among all their divergent groups—Christians, Moslems, Jews, Druzes, Bahais—a new spirit of growth in knowledge of the truths and forces which lift our common manhood into a living relationship with the Spirit of God and his work in the world. It was felt that when students mingle together in this spirit and with this aim they tend to become more sincere and intelligent in their own religious life and more useful citizens in the communities to which they belong.

In the preamble to this Brotherhood the university frankly and openly declared that it was a Christian missionary institution and that in various ways it was attempting to set forth clearly its conception of the Gospel message to mankind. At the same time it had a respectful and sympathetic attitude toward the beliefs and aspirations of its non-Christian students. The Brotherhood was established to promote interreligious cooperation between those students who seek to honor God, and who wish to help each other to follow the guidance of his Spirit of truth and service whatever the differences in their beliefs. No man was expected to compromise his standing in relation to his own religion. No one was asked to give up anything which he considered important in his religious beliefs and practices. They quite sincerely stated that they expected that each one, whatever his religion, could contribute something to such a united effort and that each could gain something from it. All would come to a better understanding

of each other's attitude toward God and man. No place was given to pointing out the defects of the religious systems to which other members belonged.

Perhaps the most remarkable statement in the preamble is the following explicit declaration: "In establishing such a brotherhood the University is no less Christian and missionary than it has always been, and it conducts these meetings in what it believes to be the spirit of its leader, Jesus Christ, and with the purpose that He always had in view in all His public activities."

A new objective can be distinguished and is gaining force, viz., that of discussing Christian advance in the presence of, and with the counsel and criticism of, adherents of another faith. The Calcutta Missionary Conference asked a Hindu professor to address them. A Methodist Annual Conference in India asked a distinguished Hindu editor to speak to them on how Christianity can be made more effective in India. Gandhi was invited to go to the World's Conference of Young Men's Christian Associations at Helsingfors. A commission sent out to India by the missionary societies of Great Britain and America invited a distinguished Indian statesman to sit with them for three days to go over their final report.[1] A unique feature of the Congress on Christian Work at Montevideo in 1925 was the presence of certain invited guests from outside the evangelical circle. There was considerable opposition to this innovation. Yet these friends, through addresses given in the evenings, helped the evangelicals, whether from North or South America, to catch some of the current of thought and feeling that would not usually find their way into

[1] "Village Education in India," p. 8.

such a gathering. One evening will be particularly remembered. It was called the "Night of the Open Heart," when the non-evangelicals were encouraged to speak freely. The addresses were courteous and friendly, but quite frank and stimulating. The spirit of fellowship which developed with these friends before the end of the Congress was one of the noteworthy features of this important Protestant conference.

These instances are signs of a growing appreciation of the value of face-to-face relations between religionists —even by missionaries with the very people to whom the mission is sent. In the preparatory pamphlets for the International Missionary Council meeting at Jerusalum, 1928, a special effort was made to secure a better understanding of the vital elements in the non-Christian religions, and to exhibit the chief insights which these systems had gained into the meaning and purpose of life. In one of the monographs particularly (Christianity and Buddhism) non-Christians were allowed to be present in quotation. The question is whether it would be a change in principle, or merely in effectiveness, if a few of the most humble, saintly, and deeply spiritual among adherents to other faiths had been invited to be present in person, instead of merely in print.

From this section it must be obvious that the purpose of meetings where different religionists come together is not necessarily the production of a hybrid religion by compromise and surrender. Conference and fellowship with the adherents of other religions does not inevitably mean either conceding the equal truth of all they hold, on the one hand, or insulting them by assertions of inferiority, on the other. The objectives given in this sec-

tion do assume, however, that there are occasions when there is distinct value in the promotion of understanding, appreciation, and fellowship.

V

Whether any particular instance of interreligious contact should be approved or not depends upon a host of circumstances. At Honolulu's Union Church a Buddhist spiritual leader of great forcefulness was welcomed by a large assembly at the midweek service. But the pastor would not have been willing to invite this Buddhist priest to occupy the pulpit on Sunday morning. He considered that time reserved for the presentation of the Christian message. This was not special discrimination against the Buddhists, for he valued too highly this opportunity of building up spiritual life to yield it to any other agency.

The objectives must be suited to the maturity or immaturity of the participants. One would not initiate a serious intellectual comparison of religions in an intermediate Sunday school, and yet it is just at this age and younger that attitudes and prejudices are formed. One Sunday school invited a Jew to tell about the feast of the Passover, after which a child remarked, "He was a Jew, but a nice Jew." All the later thought of Japan on the part of one person was affected by his hearing, as a child, a Japanese say, "If I work hard my country will be saved." After a Moslem had spoken in one school various remarks were heard—the boys and girls of Egypt worship God; they are Moslems, and pray five times a day (more than most of us do); they think Mohammed is a great prophet; men pray very early in the morning (before I am up); the sound of the Arabic call to prayer

is very strange; we Christians pray to God as a Father; Jesus is greater than Mohammed.

With children it is often the marginal rather than the direct learnings that are caught from an address by a Hindu or Buddhist. If the speaker is dapper and well-dressed, this will produce one impression. It may be just the impression which in later years will motivate the person to invite a foreign student to tea. It would be interesting to check up ten years later and endeavor to determine just what the effect of such an address by a non-Christian might be. The very memory that adherents of other faiths had been occasionally heard might help on a fair-minded attitude when in college a more serious study of religions was attempted.

Doubtless no Sunday school which is earnestly trying to build positive Christian character can afford to give much time to such addresses by non-Christians. They find it hard enough to make any impression with one system—to reconstruct lives and purposes after the mind and spirit of Jesus Christ. They should not go forth from these elementary grades with a jumble of religions. And yet many think a case can be made out for an occasional gesture of open-mindedness for the sake of important indirect, as well as direct, learnings that are almost sure to come.

VI

Commenting on the recent church conference at Lausanne the Bishop of Bombay said that if we are ever to get together as Christians we must seriously attempt to revise opinions and dispositions. Many things are needed, such as concentration on God and forgetfulness of self; the truth-loving mind; the historical mind; the

penitent heart; a love of each other in God; a contrite and humble spirit. We must allow God to eradicate faults of character, such as the tendency to consider the interests of our own religious group; our refusal to say that we have ever believed or taught what is not true; self-complacency and self-justification; the love that will not speak the truth for fear of hurting men's feelings.[1]

In such words a great church leader, contrite because of disunion among Christians, diagnosed the roots of failure at understanding among Christians. Is there a single point there made that should not be considered whenever we attempt to meet with sincere and earnest men of other faiths? Not superiority but the arrogant and self-righteous assumption of superiority is condemnable.

[1] *The International Review of Missions,* Vol. 17, pp. 83, 84.

CHAPTER VII

INTERRELIGIOUS COOPERATION IN SERVICE

I

Of the seven realms which we are considering in which relations with other faiths must be adjusted, perhaps the simplest has to do with cooperation in service. Most Christians would think of this as the easiest and least compromising.

The manifold world-task awaits workers—disease is to be abolished, economic levels are to be raised, ignorance should be eradicated, social maladjustments should be rectified. Service on a planetary basis should be inaugurated against narcotics, against war, against wrong conditions of labor. Ought we to seek opportunities where Christians and non-Christians may share responsibility in meeting such needs? Are there spiritual resources in other faiths which justify our working together with their adherents, as religionists, for a better world? Was the Institute of Pacific Relations at Honolulu in 1925 justified in assigning as a topic for round-table discussion "the application of the teachings of Jesus, Buddha, and Confucius to the problems of modern interracial and international relations"? Great numbers of non-Christians are working, or can be enlisted to work, for such ends. Will the Christian forces of the world be culpable if they shrink from cooperation with

agencies in other faiths making for the enrichment of life?

Before the manifold world-need many are coming to look upon the various religions not as rivals, but as partners and allies. This is easiest to see in the case of Judaism. It is undeniable that we share with them certain vital beliefs—that God is one, holy, and righteous; that man is a spiritual being; that the worship acceptable to God is the service of our fellow men; in other words, we both profess to hold a moral and monotheistic faith. Over against us both lies a great mass of paganized or materialized humanity. In the face of the task of maintaining the supremacy of the spiritual one would think Judaism and Christianity should stand together. Instead, they are almost completely out of touch with one another. The Jews feel that the Christian community regards them with indifference and even disdain as if they were religiously unworthy of consideration.[1]

In recent years, however, there has been an increasing amount of cooperation between Jews and Christians. The Committee on Goodwill between Jews and Christians of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, organized in 1924, assumes a definite responsibility for encouraging movements that tend directly or indirectly to bring Jewish and Christian people into friendly, cooperative relationships.

Jews have cooperated with this Committee on Goodwill in producing the following reports: The Engineers' Strike on the Western Maryland Railroad, the Denver Tramway Strike of 1920, and the Twelve-Hour Day in the Steel Industry. Approximately eighty communities

[1] Cf. A Report of the Committee on Jewish Missions of the Presbyterian Church of England, October 28, 1924.

have furnished committees willing to render volunteer service in arranging cooperation between Jewish and Christian groups in civic and other social matters. A joint Thanksgiving pronouncement appeared in about forty metropolitan dailies throughout the country, signed, in most cases, by a clergyman, a rabbi, and a priest.

The Church Peace Union has Jews as well as Christians among its officers. There were Protestant, Roman Catholic, and Jewish speakers at the International Goodwill Congress under the auspices of the World Alliance for International Friendship through the Churches, in 1926. Jews and Christians are found on The American Committee on the Rights of Religious Minorities. These are merely samples of a growing spirit of cooperation between Jews and Christians for social objectives.

The issue of this chapter may be stated thus: granting that the preceding paragraphs exemplify a proper aspiration as between Jews and Christians, ought we to work for a similar cooperative relationship between Christians and Moslems, or Christians and Hindus, or Christians and the followers of any other religion in which we may be interested? Or would such approaches virtually say that truth is nothing and accomplishment by organization is everything?

II

An answer to this question will be easier when concrete situations are faced. In 1913, when at attempt was made to secure the adoption of an article in the new constitution for China by which Confucianism would be established as the state religion, Buddhists, Moslems, Protestants, and Roman Catholics joined in petitions, and sat together on public platforms.

After the passing of the Immigration Act by the American Congress, the situation was acute in Tokyo. A joint meeting of Christians, Buddhists, and Shintoists was held in the interests of peace.

For sixteen years the Christians in a market town of China have made it their principle to work with their fellow citizens. Non-Christians are on the board of control of the boys' school and the girls' school. Non-Christians gave the land for the Christian hospital, which cooperated with the city in campaigns against cholera and opium. The hospital has worked with the local Red Swastika (Red Cross). The Christians co-operated with the Buddhists in famine relief. Their idea throughout has been to identify themselves as closely as possible with the people of the city. No welfare work of any kind was undertaken solely for Christians, but for the community, and almost invariably with some sort of cooperation on their part. Sometimes the initial suggestion would come from the non-Christians, sometimes from the Christians.

A Christian college in China is conducting research and demonstration in the silk industry, chiefly at present in the production of disease-free silkworm eggs. Non-Christian Chinese at once realize the value of such work and are ready to cooperate. Commenting on this work, one of those most interested in the college says: "I believe we must take a broad view of our function in demonstrating the objectives of our Christian service by getting people of many differing religious viewpoints, or none, to work together for common good. Christians will be bigger and more vital, and not lost in the effort, if they can get communities together on any kind of betterment."

In 1926, representatives of twelve leading temperance

and religious organizations in Japan, including Buddhists and Christians, formed a "Central Committee" to work for the passage of a bill raising the age of the present Juvenile Prohibition Law from twenty to twenty-five years. In one particular city the Christians were trying to make an impression for temperance when they were joined by a wealthy and prominent Buddhist who had a passion for this work. The rented hall of the Christians proved too small, so the Buddhist took them to his temple and thus secured a place for addresses on the main street of the town. Not infrequently in Japan Buddhists and Christians help each other in work of social uplift and render mutual assistance in other good work.

In Almora, India, Hindus, Moslems, followers of Rama Krishna, and Christians work together as one on the municipal child welfare committee. The Christian school is used for clinics and the high school was given over for common use during Baby Week. In this same town is a Christian hospital. Its local advisory committee has a Brahman chairman, with Hindu, Moslem, and Christian members, since the missionaries wish all to feel that this hospital is for the whole community composed of all classes and creeds and they wish all groups to share in the joys and perplexities of its management.

III

The foregoing illustrations of cooperation in service on the part of Christians and non-Christians may seem obviously worthy of approval. But situations arise where judgment is not so easy. Did that missionary go too far who became a member of the executive committee of a Hindu *mela* (a religious fair) held in a village near his home, even though his particular interest on the

committee was the furtherance of the agricultural and scout exhibits?

In Sialkot, India, a group of Moslem young men organized a society to prevent gambling and drinking and vice in their own ward. If the Christians are asked to join such an organization, would it be wise to co-operate in the fullest way?

The subscription lists of five philanthropic agencies in India such as the *Seva Sudan* were investigated and it was found that only one missionary had given to any of them. Would you encourage this missionary, now retired because he is over sixty-five, to continue his practice of sending one hundred rupees to each of these societies each year? To him, these organizations, though started and run by non-Christians, are children of Christian effort, acknowledging inspiration from Christ, doing the same work we are doing, training nurses, working for the lowly, and enabling widows to be self-supporting.

Should Christians in northern India contribute to the Arya Samaj Famine Relief Fund, or should they insist on the principle of giving through a Christian organization only?

Was it wise for the Near East Relief to give large sums to the Red Crescent?

Did the great Japanese Christian social worker, Kagawa, act wisely in letting the Buddhists help give out blankets which had been placed under his control, careful only that the people's need should be met? Or should he have used solely Christian agencies of relief?

The Greater Boston Federation of Churches, with the general object of associating religious organizations for cooperative service, has had Jews as members, and would welcome Christian Scientists and Roman Catholics.

A recent official statement by one of our great American societies recommends that their "missionaries be encouraged to cooperate as far as possible with native agencies operating for the social and moral betterment of the people and to cultivate a broad sympathy with all endeavors that to any degree breathe the spirit of Christ." The highest coordinating Christian body in India, the National Christian Council, in 1927 officially declared that "the missions in India stand, as they have ever stood, for the principle that improvements must be sought by friendship, by ever-increasing association of all who love India, whether Indian or foreign, in all efforts for the betterment of the country."[1] Should churches sending missionaries abroad in all sincerity attempt similar cooperation with Jews and those of other faiths at their own doors?

IV

In such united effort certain broad principles may be said to have emerged. Cooperative relations, especially when supported by respect for the personalities of all concerned and confidence in their possibilities of growth, are a most potent and available means of development for all who thus share. The effect of such contact is cumulative and results in a better understanding of the deficiencies and inadequacies of those thus brought together, and also of their attainments and more noble aspects. This association in objective service may or may not deepen respect.

On the part of none of the cooperating parties should there be compromise of principle, or the suggestion that

[1] *The Baptist Missionary Review*, Vol. 33, p. 489.

our real differences may not be of incalculable importance for religion, or that we hold our distinctive values less loyally or intensely. There should be no proselytizing in such cooperation, for the association is not for controversy nor for attack on distinctive tenets.

Ideal contact must be upon some common basis acceptable to the various parties, something that will appeal to the non-Christian sense of right and urgency as well as to the Christian. Emphasis would have to be placed on what can be done together. The cooperative effort need not be considered a conference of religions but an association of religious minded people, each seeking to bring the force of his religion upon the chosen objective.

Thanking God for whatever measure of agreement there may be between religions, we should, in the face of the evil of the world, explore the obligations growing out of such agreement. Underlying all for the Christian is the conviction that where love is, God is; and that God is revealing himself most where love is being manifested.

Interreligious cooperation in action provides a test of dynamic. In battle with plague in India or with famine in China we do not first ask what religion a man professes but what is the quality—the depth and creativity —of his capacity to serve. We welcome the chance to see what motive power for sustained sacrificial regard for the lives of human beings other faiths can give, and are glad for them to see what motive power is in Christianity.

In cooperative service and in common worship—in the first and the last of the seven realms of contact that we have been considering—are found great possibilities for laying aside a competitive spirit and for building bridges between a divided humanity.

CONCLUSION

CHAPTER VIII

SOME FUNDAMENTAL POSITIONS

Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us?—Mal. 2:10

Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.—Matt. 6:9

Is God the God of the Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yea, of Gentiles also.—Rom. 3:29

God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.—Acts 10:35

And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice; and they shall become one flock, one shepherd.—John 10:16 (*Amer. Rev.*)

And he made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed seasons, and the bounds of their habitation; that they should seek God, if haply they might feel after him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us.—Acts 17:26, 27 (*Amer. Rev.*)

I

It would be foolish to shut our eyes to the risks involved in any process of fraternization with other religions. No one should lightly subject himself to these dangers. In fellowship with those of other faiths there

may be no aggressive attack on our convictions, but there almost certainly sets in a process of attrition which tends to blunt one's convictions. There results a subtle lowering of acknowledged values in Christianity unless simultaneously definite constructive efforts are made to nurture one's sources of life. If fraternization means dulling the sharpness of one's appreciation of Jesus Christ, one would lose immeasurably. It is better to hew to the line, to be sharp cut, rather than to lose one's sense of values.

There are risks, however, which a pioneer takes that would be unwarranted in a man in ordinary life. A person who through travel and education has developed a truly catholic yet Christian mind and spirit may safely and wisely engage in types of interconfessional cooperation that would be ruinous to a provincial mind. Some people may be called to this service, while others are unqualified for it by temperament and training.

There is, also, the practical question as to whether we have energy enough or money enough to justify our taking part in associations and for objectives which though good are still not the best we know. The gain through cooperation with the better must be very definite and explicit to justify ceasing to concentrate on the best. Each of us has but one life to live, and few can afford to dissipate their energies and interests.

II

It is well in this connection to recall the struggle of Israel with the gods of Canaan. The later prophets of Israel, awakening to the new insights of monotheism, urged their people to keep themselves absolutely apart from the heathen gods about them, and to exercise severe

watchfulness against all animism, spiritism, and worship of the dead—things in which their fellow Semites were steeped. "If thine own brother, son, daughter, wife or bosom friend entice thee, saying, let us go and serve other gods, thine hand shall be first upon him to put him to death." The people were to be holy, i. e., separate. If fraternization with the religionists of Canaan had been encouraged, doubtless the Jews would never have made their great religious contribution to the world. It must be acknowledged that vigorous persecution and a rigid exclusiveness have saved for man at certain crises of his development convictions of priceless worth. Similarly, in these days, there are undoubtedly those for whom mixed religious fellowship would be a danger. They are not mature enough in thought or experience to benefit themselves or others by such contacts. Perhaps at first only the maturer Christians or carefully selected groups, and only later the masses, should venture on any form of interconfessionalism.

In particular, if those concerned are for the most part first generation Christians, infants in the new faith, with much clearer understanding of their traditional religion than of Christianity, any cooperation with the old faith may be confusing and unwise. Common worship in this case might be the meat which causes a Christian brother to offend. To urge those recently become Christian too rapidly into relations with their old faiths might do violence to their spiritual integrity. During the early years of every man, and for long ages in the history of man, far more pressing than any question of toleration is definite constructive education in a vital and dynamic faith. It was this kind of constructive emphasis that led a Roman Catholic priest to forego participation in an affair with Protestants for which he himself was pre-

pared. "I am here," he said, "primarily to guard the faith of those committed to me."

History has a further warning. Some would even say that tolerance has always led to indifference in religion, and that in a welter of sects and philosophies intolerance is the most obvious, if not the only sure, method of self-preservation. Professor Angus describes the intolerance of the early Christian preachers amid the clash of religions in the Roman Empire. To those who were in quest of salvation and testing each scheme offered, Christianity dared to say: "In no other is there salvation, for neither is there any other name under heaven that is given among men, wherein we must be saved." To those accustomed to the idea and practice of initiation into several Mysteries, it declared: "You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons." To those who, according to the religious conceptions of the time, were seeking mediators, it declared, "there is one God; also one Mediator between God and man, a man, Christ Jesus." To those accustomed to address the Lord Serapis or the Domina Isis or the Emperor as Dominus, Christianity stoutly asseverated that "there is one Lord whose name is above every name."[1]

Moreover the history of religions gives us an instance of tolerance carried to an extreme. Hinduism has been characteristically receptive and inclusive.[2] It does not say that some ideas of God are true and some are false. It does not set up one particular way for the whole

[1] Cf. Samuel Angus, "The Mystery Religions and Christianity," pp. 279, 281.

[2] Cf. S. Radhakrishnan, "The Hindu View of Life," Chapters I and II.

human race. A fundamental conviction for the Hindu is that different people achieve the realization of God in different ways. Hence, he sees man seeking God in various ways and at various levels, and believes that every view of God from the primitive worship of nature up to the highest vedantic thought represents some aspect of truth. In fact, as an Indian proverb puts it, a garden is not a garden unless it has variety of flowers. Each way meets some need of the human spirit. Each is partly true, but not the whole truth. Thus each group within Hinduism is allowed to work on toward truth, using its own historic tradition, retaining its past associations, and preserving its own individuality.

The philosophy back of this tolerance holds that the central Reality is the continual evolver of the various faiths held by man, and that periodically this reality incarnates himself in the most diverse forms. This doctrine enables Hinduism to accept any local divinity as a manifestation of God.

The history of Hinduism stretches out before us, and we can appraise its procedure. On the credit side is Hinduism's ready incorporation of the good. But it stands condemned for an equally ready acceptance of the evil and erroneous, even the repulsive or obscene. Its classic thinkers plainly recognize that there are various stages or levels of attainment. "The worshippers of the Absolute are the highest in rank; second to them are the worshippers of the personal God; then come the worshippers of the incarnations like Rama, Krishna, Buddha; below them are those who worship ancestors, deities and sages; and lowest of all are the worshippers of the petty forces and spirits."[1] One can understand

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 32.

the temporary toleration of baser practices and beliefs on the theory that their adherents cannot suddenly transcend them, but Hinduism has failed to show a passion for eradicating the lower levels. There has been no spiritual integrity to cut away unsparingly the rank growth of acknowledged superstition.

One of the most brilliant exponents of modern Hinduism acknowledges that—

"the majority of Hindus . . . acquiesce in admittedly unsatisfactory conceptions of God. The cultivated tolerate popular notions as inadequate signs and shadows of the incomprehensible, but the people at large believe them to be justified and authorised. It is true that the thinking Hindu desires to escape from the confusion of the gods into the silence of the Supreme, but the creed still stands gazing at the heavens. In the name of toleration we have carefully protected superstitious rites and customs. Even those who have a clear perception of religious values indulge in practices which are inconsistent with their professions on the comfortable assumption that superiority should not breed want of sympathy for those who are not up to the mark. There has not been in recent times any serious and systematic endeavour to raise the mental level of the masses and place the whole Hindu population on a higher spiritual plane." [1]

The history of Hinduism shows that its synthetic spirit and comprehensive charity has been undiscriminating. A case may well be made out for the assimilation of the good in other systems, but the lesson I gain from Hinduism is that it would be better for Christianity to shun all influence of other systems rather than exercise a weak or sentimental or undiscriminating hospitality to

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

other faiths, however genuinely held. Nor, leaving these two extremes, is the solution in religious eclecticism. There is nothing in the history of religions that would encourage an informed Christian to advocate the conscious mingling of creeds so that there results an amalgam composed of elements abstracted from various religions.

What history does show is that a faith that is vital and dynamic may distinctly gain from its contact with other systems. One of the most trusted and catholic-minded among recent Christian thinkers tells us:

"Only thus can we be freed from anxiety, and can we sincerely rejoice and be confirmed in our faith in God the Omnipresent, when we discover how largely the Old Testament Book of Wisdom borrows from Plato, how appreciable is St. Paul's indebtedness to the Greek Mysteries, how much in the form of the Fourth Gospel comes from Philo, how greatly Tertullian learnt from Roman Law, how important was St. Augustine's indebtedness to Plotinus, how almost wholesale was the Dionysian writer's incorporation of Proclus, and how systematic and gratefully avowed was St. Thomas of Acquinas' utilization of Aristotle. Doubtless these appropriations varied in their carefulness, necessity and permanent value. Yet even this most incomplete list surely indicates that the process in general was as legitimate as it has proved fruitful. Christianity could not otherwise have lived and thriven in the world; and only those who can manage to figure to themselves the world as forsaken by the very God Who made it, and Who sent to it His Son, can, in strictness, be disquieted by such preparations by God for His own fully incarnate coming."[1]

[1] Baron Friedrich von Hügel, "Essays and Addresses in the Philosophy of Religion," p. 135.

III

Many of the decisions reported as having been made in the situations described in the foregoing chapters were made on an opportunist basis. There should be discoverable some central principle that would go far toward resolving all the cases. Such a vital center is to be found in incomparable fullness in the Bible, and might be described as "the doctrine of the priority of the Holy Love or Grace of God." It is imperative upon Christians to mediate that Holy Love. And if they are to do so and to imitate its unasked spontaneity, they must go forth into the lives of others and commend it. They must make the spirit of creative love profoundly evident. If this affectionate aggressiveness in mediating the undeserved Divine Love had been maintained, instead of substituting the much less expensive stand for verbalism and legalism in Christian doctrine, many of the situations in these chapters never would have arisen.

It was this confusion that lay back of a conversation in a certain Oriental city where the head of the main Buddhist temple was a Westerner converted to Buddhism. Many who know him feel that he has been greatly misguided but that he is absolutely sincere, and they regard him as a brother searching for the truth. For the most part, however, he is being socially ostracized by Christians. "Isn't that right?" said a leading ecclesiastic of the city. "Isn't he an apostate from Christ?" "What else could we do?" asked another leader in Christian work; "he came here to fasten Buddhism on the Japanese youth." Then came the answer of a third who suggested that they might at least invite him to dinner! It was this same confusion that caused that deeply spiritual missionary to regret over a period of

thirty-five years his failure to respond to the real need of two Hindu widows even though they were returning from an idolatrous pilgrimage (see p. 96).

A conscience co-working with a creative Personality motived wholly by love may lead to actions that on the surface seem inconsistent. It may lead us to give the marigolds to the ignorant old woman who wants to enrich her offering at the temple, and to refuse them to an educated youth who should be facing a decision as to his choice of worship (see p. 95). But there is a deep abiding consistency in the effort to do what is best for the old woman at her stage, and what is best for the boy at his.

When people argue that certain Buddhist temples will be rebuilt anyway, and therefore decide to contribute and thus gain the advantage that goes with giving (see p. 80); when they reason that the Parsee priest will get from books and catalogues the help he craves in spite of any refusal and so might as well be admitted to the training class for Christians (see p. 97); whenever such a calculating spirit reveals itself, it shows how far we are from possessing the badge of Christian discipleship, in imitating a Holy God who cares for men and whose grace precedes our effort.

Let the last word of this section be a warning that any person who has no vital experience of God through the means most available to him should not make the venture of interreligious fellowship. Without something real and definite to give, cooperation should not be attempted. A Christian should have a solid Christian experience or else the exposure might be dangerous. The evangelist in India who most embodies a liberal attitude toward other faiths spends an hour in prayer before each

of his addresses. His is no minimum Christianity, but a continuous living experience because the conditions for vitality are being met from day to day.

IV

There is a further precaution that deserves to be treated by itself. People rightly emphasize the need of knowing the various "religions." Throughout this book we have talked about "systems" of thought. We have referred to Hinduism and Buddhism as though they were fairly definite systems of ideas. Such ordered classifications of the foundation principles of a given faith have their manifest justification. But it is possible for religions as systems to take proportionately too large a place in our thought. In the end our interest is in human beings. Hence we have to supplement this systematized thought by seeing what the faiths are like when embodied in living men and women.

But to do this we have to combat a habit of the human mind. Since it has a distinct tendency toward classification, we do not sufficiently think of people as individuals. Just as we tend to select the dominant traits of another race, associate these traits with certain external racial marks such as slant eyes, dark skins, black, straight hair, and then assign these traits to every individual who has the given external marks, so we tend to set up a set of mental pigeon-holes for religions. We select certain doctrines, practices, and attitudes as characteristic of Islam, or Hinduism, or Buddhism. Thereafter we tend to think of the given religions as hard, fixed entities. We associate the selected characteristics of a religion with its respective pigeon-hole, and then when anyone bears the outward symbols or name of that

religion we consign him to this compartment, attributing to him all for which this compartment has come to stand.

This device is a short-cut means of dealing with quantities of human beings—but its simplicity comes from ignoring their individuality. Because we are isolated from the actual human beings of another faith, traditional impressions and misconceptions are handed down from generation to generation without revision, so that persons of one religion think of a person of another religion all too often as being something which that person himself would vigorously repudiate. Our minds almost resent meeting a Hindu or Moslem who does not fit into our classification and so is not explicable as a particular instance of the compartmental conception.

We forget that when we talk about the characteristics of Hindus or Moslems as a whole we are dealing with abstractions. There are no such compartments in actual life. There are no Confucianists in China in the sense of people holding the abstract system we teach under that name. There are unquestionably social groups called Buddhists, but that is by no means assurance that their lives are actuated by the tenets of theology taught in a course on Buddhism. The concept "Hinduism" is a useful tool of thought. It is a useful device by which to analyze and to classify facts. But let us not forget that in actual life we deal with people, not with formulated religious systems. It is a matter for scholarship to determine whether love and self-sacrifice are nourished or whether they are made anemic by Hinduism as a system. What we do know is that love and self-sacrifice are found in many a Hindu. Real human beings manifest too much variety and flux of thought to rest with docility within such generalizations.

Furthermore, the modern experimental science of

human nature shows what infinitely complex creatures of impulse and passion and emotional preference we are. The picture of a man as a purely logical machine consciously shaping his life by an abstract system called Hinduism or Buddhism is not true to life. For most people religion is only one among often conflicting and unruly impulses. Hence there is generally a difference between what a man thinks he believes, what he tells others that he believes, and what as a matter of fact causes him to act as he does. That by which men rule their lives comes to them as all other values have come—through social experience wider than what we usually call religion. It is through the interaction of the individual and the group that values come to birth; it is through human experience that God reveals himself. If these values coming from the eternal process which some call the more extended incarnation are to retain vitality they must in their turn be mediated to the next generation by social interaction which may not always be subsumed under the name of a religion.

From this point of view, again, we see what an abstraction in this process a formulated system known as "Hinduism" or "Buddhism" is. It is of the utmost importance that we get beyond this idea of compartments and deal with what men actually believe and that on which they build their lives. For such compartments are nearly always misleading when we have to do with that rich concretion—an individual's faith. Certainly in connection with religion we learn relatively little of what a man thinks, believes, and has as his inward springs of life if we know only the religious system with which he is associated. Unhurried talks are necessary if we would understand his point of view at first hand. It

is possible for us to be so concerned about the particular work that we are doing that we do not take time to learn what the very people for whom we are supposed to be working are really thinking.

The mistake does not stop with the tendency to lose sight of the individual in an overemphasis on the religious system with which he is associated. We too often go on to deduce what the adherents must be like from a logical consideration of the points which proverbially have been fixed upon as representing the essence of that religion. We need to check up our abstractions with those things which the people concerned regard as their essentials and by a study of the actual embodiment of these religions in conduct and character, in aspiration and attainment. We should learn to know people as well as systems. In fact, this is one of the most marked aspects of the modern approach to other faiths.

An illustration of how much more composite an actual human life may be than would appear from a simple label is found in the experience of Halide Edib Hanum while in the American college at Constantinople.

"I had hitherto been a faithful Moslem in heart and practice, but I was not orthodox in mind. . . . I plunged into a passionate study of religious creeds and strangely enough I felt charmed and soothed by my reading of Buddha. . . . While I was free from all material and past influences in moments of unrepressed thinking, some other part of me—a strange and distinct part—claimed to be the outcome of Islamic culture, a product of mosques, cemeteries, and set prayers. With strange insistence I held on to the outward aspect of Islamism, and in some mysterious way I struggled to fit all the new

outlook of life acquired through my education in college, into Islamic experience and belief."[1]

It may be well to give still another illustration. Here is a man, a professor in an Indian college, who is called a Brahman. He thus described his personal religion to a group of friends at a retreat in India:

"In my religion there is an element of the old Vedic faith of my ancestors. On certain occasions, I worship the Sun and the Fire, using the identical hymns which my ancestors used thousands of years ago; only I look upon the Sun and the Fire as the manifestation of the Supreme One and in worshipping them, I worship Him. Secondly, there is the Upanishadic strain. I sometimes rise to sublime heights of spirituality when I read about Nachiketas and his famous quest after Truth. Thirdly, there is the Buddhistic element and it is owing to the influence of the religion of Gautama Buddha and of Jainism that we have all become vegetarians and teetotalers. Fourthly, there is the puranic element, the popular religion of Temples, Priests, of Feasts and Fasts and Pilgrimages, and above all of idol worship. I am not ashamed to confess I am an idolator, because it is only through an idol (a symbol) that we of finite capacity can think of the Infinite. Again, in the dim background of our religious consciousness there is an element of Animism, a tendency to offer homage, out of irrational fear, to the village goddess of small-pox when some one near and dear to us is attacked. There is the rationalistic element of inquiry and scepticism, the result of our knowledge of Science in the widest sense of the term. There is above all the influence of all other religions, such as Islam and Christianity, because we come into daily contact with the followers of those religions and

[1] "Memoirs of Halide Edib," p. 472.

see how these faiths serve to uphold and guide their adherents in their voyage through life. Thus, speaking of my own faith, I must confess it is not a simple thing to be put into a formula; but a complex and variegated one having many constituent elements which work upon me at different times with different degrees of force and conviction."

Nor is it only certain intellectuals such as have been cited whose actual religion is complex. The masses of the people, also, are for the most part concerned with beliefs and attitudes outside of the formal and orthodox teaching of the faiths to which they are supposed to belong. Only about ten million are returned as animists in India but anyone who goes through the villages at the time of an epidemic or studies the great crowds who pilgrim to shrine and festival knows how many listed under a higher faith are acting on animistic beliefs and practices. In Africa the masses called Moslems are only in the most superficial way occupied with the formal teachings of Islam. There is an immense amount of unacknowledged animism still in human folk, and we get little conception of what moves their lives by going only to systematic Taoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, or even to Christianity.

We must learn, therefore, to think of people as individuals and not only as units in a religious classification. It will be better, for example, to treat certain students as boys rather than as Moslems, and to deal with certain patients as men in need rather than as Jews or Hindus. We are not first of all religionists—these Buddhists, Taoists, and I. We are fellow travelers, and it is intended that we should belong to the same family with a common Father. In considering the various issues raised in this book, let us remember that our main concern is with

the enrichment of the lives of human beings, and not primarily with advancing or destroying religious systems. Most human contacts are between men and men—not between religion and religion. Whenever we proceed by classification, folk usually lose something that lets us love them.

V

At all the crossroads of life, as we have so often seen in previous chapters, we meet our fellow pilgrims toward God. Back of the attitudes and reactions called forth by such contacts lies a judgment as to the nature of the faiths these pilgrims hold. It behooves us to see that our working attitude to these faiths is based upon a true estimate of their character and function. Obviously, this is not the place to begin a treatment of the philosophy of religion. But contrasts and convictions may be briefly stated.

At one extreme are those who hold that all religions are essentially the same in spite of the variety in their external forms. There are many gates into the City of God. The various religions are different rivers to the sea, but there is one embracing ocean. There are apparently isolated coral islands in the Pacific, but if you go far enough down you find the connecting sea-bed. The paths at the foot of the mountain diverge, but, as a Japanese proverb says, they all lead to the same summit and command a view of the same moon. Such metaphors asserting ultimate equivalence are often taken to mean that all religions are equally true, that one religion is as good as another, and that, therefore, each person should be left to worship God as his present conscience and preference dictates.

This view seems strongest when attention is concentrated on the mystic sense of immediacy. It is a familiar statement that when one has advanced to a certain stage the mystics of all religions are at one.[1] But as so clearly pointed out by Professor Otto[2] the differentia which determine the value of a religion are not to be found in this characteristic, but rather in the intellectual and moral elements which are joined with mysticism. A savage may have the feeling of the *numen* even more strongly than a highly cultured man, but his religion may be actually harmful rather than otherwise.

As a matter of fact, the critical history of religions demonstrates that all do not have the same character nor are they free from irreconcilable contradictions. Ask of each religion what conception of God it teaches, what attitude toward life it inculcates, what conception it has regarding what life here may be, what of the ultimate goal. Then the differences at once appear. That they may have common elements or aspirations is true; but to say that all religions are alike is a mark of religious illiteracy. It betokens either a loose way of speaking or an ignorance of the special characteristics which sharply distinguish one religion from another. This is no day for tolerance without accurate and scientific comparison.

We rightly shrink from attributing bad faith, impure lives or selfish motives to all who differ from us in religion. But to assert that there is no difference between the goodness of the one and the goodness of the other is to weaken one's sense of folly, weakness, and sin as real facts and to dull all growth in adequate and

[1] Evelyn Underhill, "Essentials of Mysticism"; S. Radhakrishnan, "The Hindu View of Life," p. 34ff.

[2] Rudolph Otto, "The Idea of the Holy."

accurate insight. Matthew Arnold said, "I would not burn a man who prefers Eliza Cook to Milton, nevertheless Milton is greater than Eliza Cook."[1] Esthetic inspiration is, no doubt, back of all art; but that does not mean that the school of Raphael is not more valuable than the scratchings on early caves.

At the other extreme are those who assert that their own religion alone is true in the sense that it possesses the whole truth, leaving to other religions only falsity. Their river of life has its source in Truth and it alone leads to God's abode. Other rivers have other sources and empty into quite other seas.

When this attitude takes the form of intolerance and bigotry, it leads some to try to exterminate the other faiths. It often leads to recrimination, exclusiveness, and contempt. Persons caught by this temper think in terms of victory and defeat. Their reports abound in such terms as advance, retreat, opposing forces, conquering army. They impress those to whom they go as belonging to a hostile army. They feel uneasy or jealous when truth and goodness and beauty are found in other faiths, for this would appear to strengthen the other side, and an appreciation of such good would seem to weaken the fervor of their blows. For them Buddhism and Confucianism have no survival value. The story of Rama must be forgotten and that of Jacob learned. Love and loyalty to Christianity are measured by the severity of one's hostility to other religions.

It may help a person to know whether he belongs to this group if he imagines that he possesses some magic word by which he could at a stroke abolish all the tem-

[1] Quoted by Baron Friedrich von Hügel, "Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion," p. 6.

ples and mosques of other faiths. Would he wipe all these centers out as creations of an evil mind, or as agencies of popular delusion, or at best as merely negative? Or would he draw back with horror from such use of power? The position of a missionary of long standing in China was revealed by a less imaginary issue. He had been asked to take part in a retreat arranged by a central Christian body to be held in one of the beautiful Buddhist temples. He replied that he did not see how any Christian could find God in a heathen temple, and hence could not join the group. Whether one belongs to this second extreme or not is indicated by one's attitude to the inadequacies of other faiths. As each new deficiency is seen, does it cause you to rejoice? Or do you find yourself, with a great evangelist in India, "confessing to a deep disappointment in regard to what the non-Christians seem to be finding as an out-turn of their faith"? [1] Still another test faced the Calcutta Missionary Conference of 1927 in the statement that the growth of national feeling was making in one area an increased demand for the Tamil classics, particularly the religious classics. Could you say of this tendency, as did one of the most evangelical of the missionaries present, "This is, in many ways, a healthy spirit, and should be encouraged"? [2]

Between these two extremes is the view that to have no religion is to lack a characteristic element in human nature, or to suffer this element to atrophy, and that every religion has truth in it, though of demonstrably different degrees of clearness and worth. Each is the combined result of God's approach to man and of man's

[1] E. Stanley Jones, "Christ at the Round Table," p. 57.
[2] "Young Men of India," Vol. 39, p. 591.

receptivity to God. Most religions are organized ethical and social systems which contribute to the stability of society. From these standpoints they are entitled to respect as facts in the complex social situation and as part of the total religious force of the world.

The distinction between them, therefore, is not always between the true and the false, but between the adequate and the inadequate. We are interested in dynamic and motive power, as well as in insights into Reality and into the meaning and goal of life. It is possible scientifically to appraise one religion as vastly superior, both in the range and depth of its insights and in the release of enabling power. In other words, the harbors differ: some are deep and clear, some are shallow, muddy, sand-barred, and dangerous. But each has been a mooring place where storm-tossed mariners with deep-lying human needs have found shelter. In this attitude to other religions there is appreciation but with discriminating appraisal.

VI

All through this book situations have been presented which have drawn forth attitudes to other faiths. In conclusion a few summary statements may be made, suggesting some fundamental positions.

Human nature is essentially the same the world over, and the deepest human needs are also essentially the same.

We have a God who is working universally in all races at all times as best he may. His Spirit indwells the finite spirit ever pressing it onward to further light and fuller consciousness. Hence "the love of God is greater than the measure of man's mind."

As religious persons and especially as Christians, we should be prepared to recognize persistently, frankly, and fully all elements of truth and goodness to be found in other systems.[1]

We gladly apprehend and fully profess that all those elements come from the one God of all truth and are intended to lead on to him. It is just as much a part of reverent orthodoxy to recognize the true and good in other faiths and acknowledge the source of these in God as it is to point out the error and evil. Just because of its faith in the Incarnation, Christianity is bound to "recognize, respect, love and protect continually not only the less full and less articulate stages of grace, in the other religions and in all they possess of what is true," but also "to recognize, respect, love and protect the non-religious levels and complexes of life, as also coming from God, as occasions, materials, stimulations, necessary for us men towards the development of our complete humanity and especially also of our religion."[2]

These statements are likely to be misleading if they are not accompanied by an equally definite awareness of the unequal richness of these elements in the various faiths. There have been varyingly intense and varyingly precious feelings after God. In some religions you find

[1] This bold, frank note was struck in the first of the preparatory questions issued for the International Missionary Council meeting at Jerusalem, 1928: "In countries where the minds of men have been molded by other faiths than Christianity, what are the sources from which chiefly they draw strength and comfort? What are the chief insights which they have gained into the meaning and the purpose of life?" This sympathetic approach to other faiths has been increasingly noticeable since the Edinburgh Conference, 1910.

[2] Baron Friedrich von Hügel, "Essays and Addresses on the Philosophy of Religion," p. 238.

more of error and corruption and in some more of truth and health. Accurate knowledge of these inequalities should increasingly become the common property of every educated man.

A just attitude to non-Christian faiths should depend upon what these faiths really are, and this can be determined only by a sympathetic and open-minded, yet discriminating, study of them and not by any *a priori* assumptions. A missionary church should be ready for that laborious and patient study of the facts and that severe discipline of spirit and mind that is necessary for freedom-giving truth to be attained. It will take some intellectual effort to adjust our approach to the facts as now available. Attitudes are important as a preliminary condition for the wholesome sharing of insights.

Just because religion can be such a great factor in normal human life, any difference in the degree or kind of truth and insight is of profound importance. Let no one say that as long as each person has a religion of his own it is a matter of indifference what that religion is.

When Sadhu Sundar Singh visited the Hindu pundits at Benares they asked him what great truth or profound philosophy he had found in Christianity that made him leave his old religion. His answer was, "I found Jesus Christ." That answer is immensely significant. We do not desire to think or speak disrespectfully of moral or religious attainment effected without conscious knowledge of Jesus, but we do earnestly desire to share with our brethren everywhere that knowledge of him and of his spirit which we believe to be God's unspeakable gift.

For many, the deepest need of their lives is to know the dominant purpose and character of Reality. The answer bodied forth in Jesus Christ is that the character is sacrificial love, and that the purpose is "to educate

and fashion finite spirits, through free effort into the status of children of God; to bring them to a condition of intellectual and moral development such that they may enjoy that complete communion with God which is the consummation of their being and may form that community which, by the harmony of themselves with one another and with their creator, constitutes the Kingdom of God."[1] The Christian revelation of the purpose and character of God gives a foundation in the eternal order for all efforts to forward understanding and goodwill between peoples.

If Christianity is simply one type of ethical culture, then it need not be anxiously distinguished from the ethical cultures of other religions. But if in Christianity we are convinced that we have not first and foremost a code of morality, but a religion; if here we find a distinctive and qualitative expression of Reality as creative personality motived wholly by love; and if we believe that the movement which began with the Hebrew prophets and culminated in Jesus Christ is still with us a living, growing, creative force—then we have gained a perspective in the presence of which the issues raised in these pages find their simplification.

[1] W. R. Mathews, "Studies in Christian Philosophy," p. 108.

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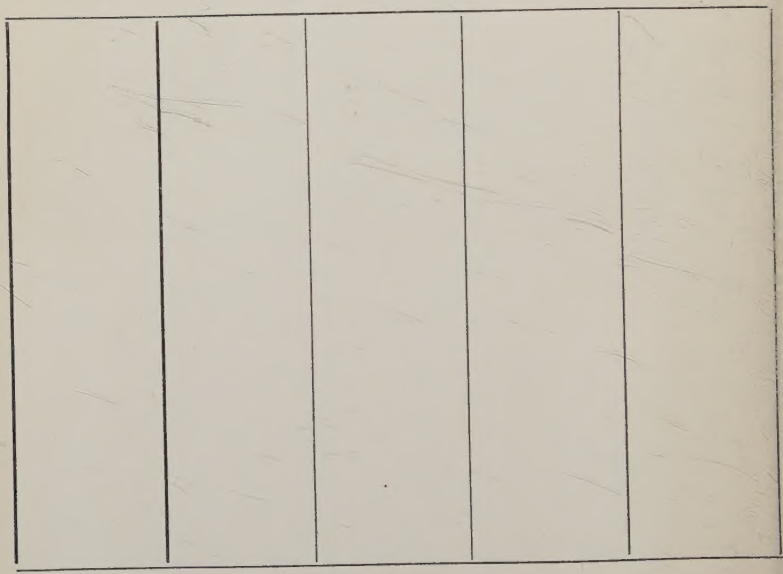

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